

# **TIMELINE OF MOTORCYCLING**

## **Motorcycle Miscellany**



**Compiled & edited by  
Dave Richmond**





Compiled, edited and written by Dave Richmond  
[motorcycletimeline.com](http://motorcycletimeline.com)

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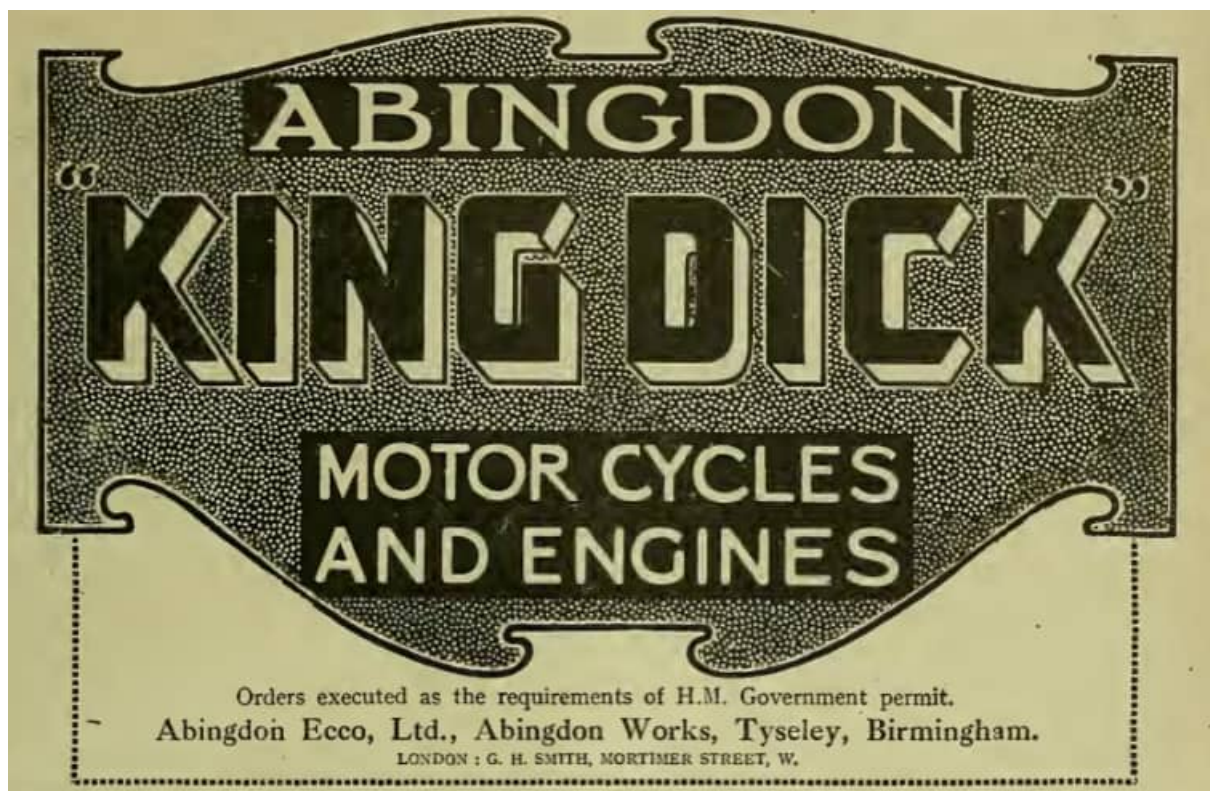
## Contents

A-Z Gallimaufry.....	2
Artwork/Humour.....	58
Letters to the Editor.....	329
Ixion.....	347
Melange.....	358
Images of Yesteryear.....	1327
WW2 Images.....	1466

A-Z: a gallimaufry

*Biographies, potted marque histories, forgotten words and phrases, technical terms ... that's why it's gallimaufic.*

**Abingdon Engineering:** Set up in 1856 to make tools. Being based in Birmingham it's hardly surprising that the firm became part of the burgeoning West Midlands bicycle industry. In 1903, like so many other bicycle manufacturers, it began to fit engines, initially from Minerva, Fafnir and MMC. It adopted the memorable trade mark King Dick, named after the boss's prize winning bulldog, and by 1910 Abingdon King Dick was producing its own 3.5hp singles and 6hp V-twins, some of which were supplied to other manufacturers including Ariel. Innovations included the Abingdon Spring Fork, featuring an early coil-sprung, telescopic shock absorber. Abingdon King Dick survived the post-WW1 depression; in 1925 it abbreviated its trade name to AKD and concentrated on ohv fourstroke singles from 148-346cc. The last AKD motorcycles were made in 1932 but King Dick is still very much in business, still based in Birmingham and still making hand tools.



This AKD advert dates from 1917.

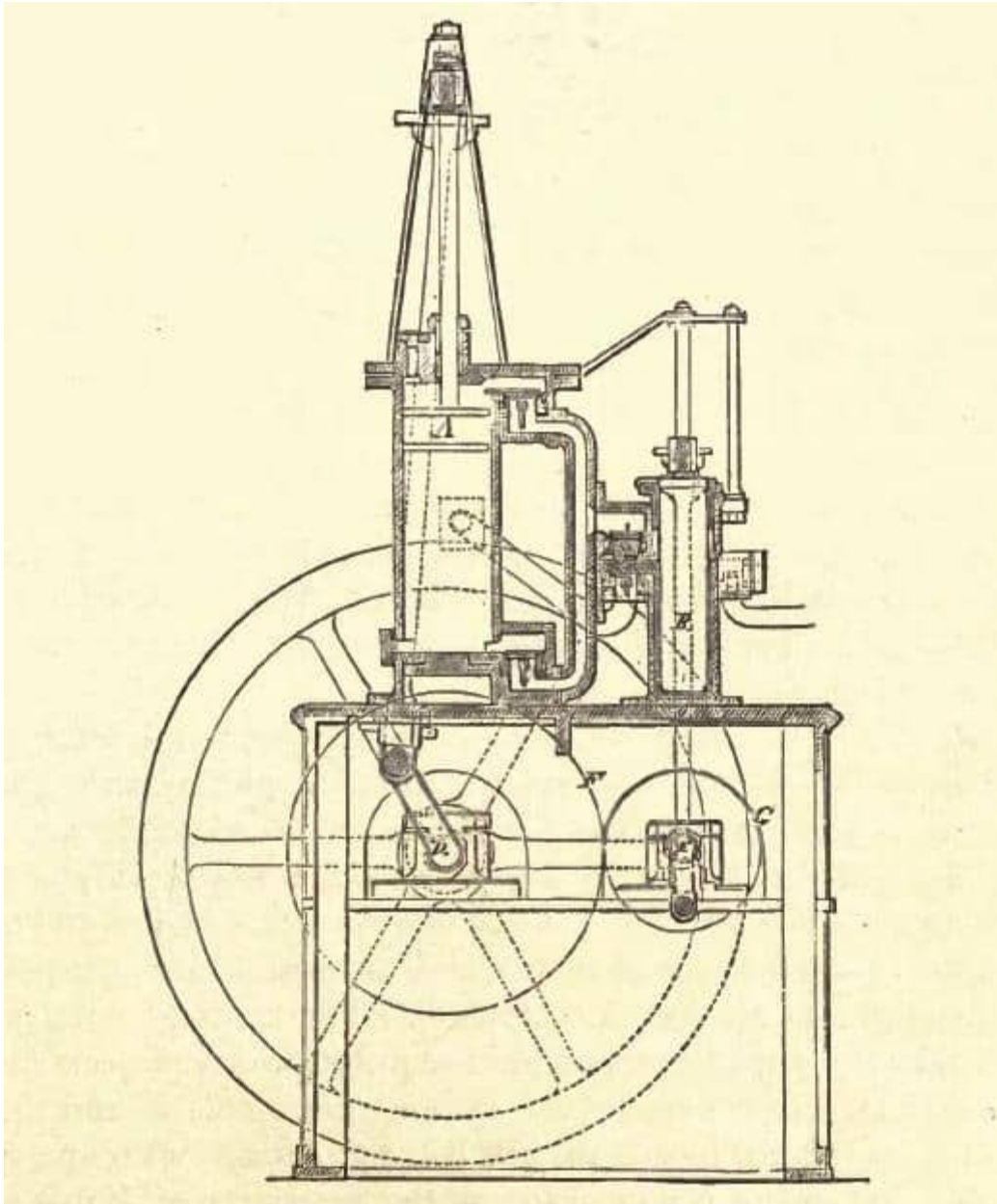
**Acceleration:** The rate at which a motorcycle overcomes inertia to reach the desired speed. Inertia increases with the mass of the bike and rider, which is why skinny brats on lightweights can get away from the lights ahead of their fuller-figured elders and betters. Sprinters record acceleration in terms of thousandths of a second over a measured distance; my M21 is better suited to a calendar.

**Anti-vibrator:** Referred to a spring designed to shield the rider from engine vibration and road shocks—what we would now refer to as a suspension unit, circa 1903.

**AOIV:** Automatically operated inlet valve (basically a springloaded flap (qv moiv)).

**Don Jeronimo de Ayanz (1553-1613):** Knight of the Order of Calatrava, was a Spanish soldier, painter, astronomer, musician and inventor. As a soldier he fought in France, Flanders, Portugal and the Azores; he also foiled a French plot to murder King Felipe II. All of which inspired playwright Lope de Vaga to base a play on his life. As an inventor he designed windmills, a distillery to provide fresh water at sea, scales accurate to fractions of a gram, a means of measuring torque, a diving suit and a type of submarine. And (here's where he becomes relevant to our story) after he was appointed to oversee the hundreds of mines in Spain and its empire De Ayanz devised a way to use steam to pump water out of a mine and pump fresh air in. In one year alone he was granted 48 patents, including one for the use of steam power. The year was 1606—almost 100 years before Savery's 'miner's friend' began to pump water from British mines.

**William Barnett (1802-1865):** In 1838 Barnett patented not one but three gas engines featuring an effective form of flame ignition; they also compressed the gas prior to ignition. These innovations were widely copied and were still in use as late as the start of the 20th century. The ignition system was similar to that later adopted by Hugon and Otto. They had three cylinders but only one of these produced power; the others were pumps to compress the gas and air. Barnett's designs represented important steps on the way to the first practicable internal combustion engine, built by Etienne Lenoir in 1860. Dugald Clerk (qv), in his seminal book on gas and oil engines, wrote: "Barnett's inventions as described in his specification are so important that they require more complete description than has been accorded to earlier inventors."



This version

of Barnett's two-stroke gas engine was double acting with separate gas and air pumps operating at twice engine speed to deliver the fresh charge to either end of the cylinder.

**Father Eugenio Barsanti (1821-1864):** In 1854 Barsanti, of the Piarist Fathers of Scolopi, and hydraulic engineer Felice Matteucci patented a hydrogen/air engine in London. They chose London because patent law in Italy did not offer the international protection of a British patent. A prototype was finally built in the 1860s and some Italians still claim Barsanti invented the internal combustion engine.

**Bat (vb):** Slang for riding flat out, circa 1930.

**Blind (n/vb):** Slang for a flat-out ride/to ride flat out, circa 1920.

**Blue 'Un:** Nickname for *The Motor Cycle* inspired by its blue masthead.



**George Brayton:** In 1872 a patent was issued to GB Brayton of Philadelphia for a gas engine he called Brayton's Ready-Motor. The following year it was tested in New York by Prof Thurston of the Stevens Institute of Technology. In 1878 the Ready-Motor was introduced into the UK by Messrs Simon of Nottingham. A pump was used to compress air and force it through a series of perforated brass disks and materials exposing a large surface of petrol in a separate cylinder so as to vaporize the fuel.

**Samuel Brown (1799-1849):** In 1823 Brown was granted the first of a series of patents for gas engines that seem to have been inspired by the condensing steam engine. Burning gas, rather than steam, expelled the air from a vertical cylinder and cold water was injected to "condense the flame and produce a vacuum". It was the first gas engine to earn its keep in industry. The August 1824 issue of *Mechanics* magazine reported that one of Brown's multi-cylinder engines had raised 300 gallons of water 15ft fuelled by a single cubic foot of gas. By 1832 his engines were powering pumps at Croydon; Soham, Cambs; and Eagle Lodge, Old Brompton.

**Bubbler:** Slang, circa 1910, for surface carburettor (qv "pulveriser").

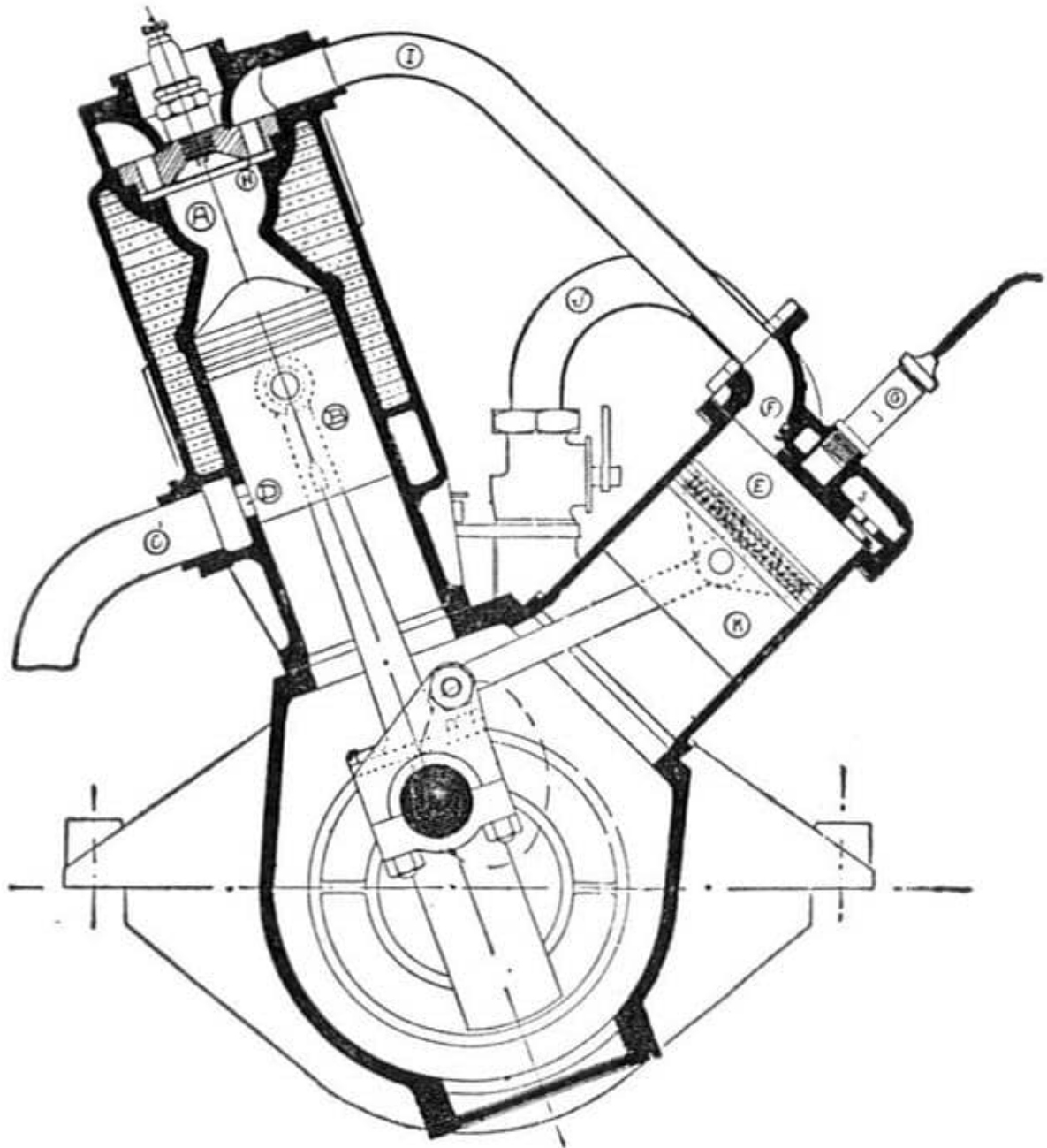
**Change speed lever:** Original (pre-Word War 1) term for what is still known as the gearchange lever; the term survived the move from hand to foot actuation.

**Chater-Lea** produced complete motorcycles from 1903 to 1935. Founded by William Chater Lea in 1890 (the hyphenated name was adopted for aesthetic reasons) the company produced bicycles and components from its establishment until the mid-1960s. While a number of firms made proprietary engines, Chater-Lea's contribution was a range of cycle parts that helped many small manufacturers into the motor cycling game.



**Dugald Clerk (1854-1933):** In 1881 Scottish engineer Clerk patented a form of two-stroke engine featuring a separate charging cylinder. The modern, compact two-stroke

engine, which uses the area below the piston as a charging pump, was designed a few years later by Joseph Day and proved eminently suitable for powering motorcycles from Scott to Suzuki. Clerk was acclaimed as an authority on internal combustion engines, acting as judge at the automobile trials at Richmond in 1899 and 1900. In 1908 he became president of the Incorporated Institution of Automobile Engineers and was also elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. In 1916 Clerk was appointed director of engineering research for the Admiralty, sat on the advisory committee for aeronautics to the Air Ministry and was knighted in 1917.



Dugald Clerk's two-stroke was the ancestor of every ring-a-ding-ding-ding two-stroke.

**Cobby:** Slang, circa 1930s, for sporty; presumably derived from the horseriding term 'cob'.

**Commencer:** Slang, circa 1950, for kickstarter.

**Cyclorn:** Abbreviation circa 1903, for (motor) cycle-horn.

**Abraham Darby I II and III (1678-1717, 1711-1763 and 1750-1789):** Britain was lucky enough to get three Abraham Darbys in succession: lucky because all three did things with metal that put them at the heart of the industrial revolution which would make Britain the workshop of the world. And that was the foundation for a motorcycle industry that dominated the global market. In 1709 Abraham Darby, the son of a Quaker farmer, worked out how to burn coke rather than charcoal to produce brass and iron. This was good timing because increasing demand was outstripping the supply of charcoal, forcing up prices. Switching to coke entailed a move from forests to coalfields. Key centres were South Wales, Scotland, Staffordshire and Shropshire the Darbys were based at Coalbrookdale, on the River Severn in Shropshire. The new fuel cut the price of brass and iron as it boosted output. Darby also set up the world's first metallurgy laboratory and patented a continuous sand-moulding method to mass-produce cast brass and iron goods so costs fell. His casting methods allowed the accurate production of complex components, facilitating the development of steam engines. There was another useful by-product. Coke was, and is, made by heating coal. The coal gas collected from coke ovens was not only burned to provide light and heat, it was used as fuel by designers of early internal combustion engines. Darby's son, Abraham 2, went into the family business bigtime, expanding capacity with six new furnaces and learning how to make purer 'pig' iron which was just right for forging into wrought iron. He also bought control of the county's entire output of coal and iron ore – horsedrawn railways from the mines to the furnaces and then to docks on the Severn. This boosted the firm's transport production twenty-fold. Steam pumps were installed to increase water supplies to the waterwheels that powered the furnaces. And in 1779 Abraham 2's son, Abraham 3, used wrought iron to make the world's first iron bridge which is still a potent symbol of the industrial revolution. The 100ft bridge was prefabricated spans the Severn at the spot now known as Ironbridge. It's still in use and Ironbridge, the birthplace of the industrial revolution, is well worth a visit by any motorcyclist who wants to understand the roots of the British industry. Paintings and posters promoted the revolutionary new bridge and the international publicity certainly helped the company's expansion. But this success led to a labour shortage. Abraham 3 responded by building good quality housing and buying local farms to guarantee affordable food supplies. He also paid higher wages than the surrounding farms, mines and potteries. Labour problem solved. The dynasty died with Abraham 3 in 1789 but a succession of ironmasters continued the expansion programme. In 1802 Richard Trevthick relied on the expertise of the Coalbrookdale works to produce boilers for his first high-pressure steam engines. Exports included iron pots and other trade goods for Africa, sugar mills for the West Indies and steam engines for the Far East.



Britain led the way to the new iron age (and three of my bikes sport iron heads). This is Coalbrookdale by Night, by Philippe Jacques de Loutherbourg, painted in 1801.

**Dr Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802):** Grandfather of the immortal Charles, Erasmus was a large, loquacious eccentric whose interests ranged from botany to phisiology, physics and philosophy. He figures in our story not as an inventor but as an encourager of inventors. In 1766 he wrote to his friend Matthew Boulton: “As I was riding home yesterday, I considered the scheme of the fiery chariot, and the longer I contemplated this favourite idea, the more practicable it appeared to me. I shall lay my thoughts before you, crude and undigested though they may appear to be, telling you as well what I thought would not do as what would do, as by those hints you may be led into various trains of thinking upon this subject, and by that means (if any hints can assist your genius, which, without hints, is above all others I am acquainted with) be more likely to improve or disapprove. These things are required: 1st, a rotary motion; 2d, easily altering its direction to any other direction; 3d, to be accelerated, retarded, destroyed, revived instantly and easily; 4th, the bulk, the weight, and expense of the machine to be as small as possible in proportion to its use. Let there be two cylinders.

Suppose one piston up, and the vacuum made under it by the *je d'eau froid*. That piston can not yet descend because the cock is not yet opened which admits the steam into its antagonist cylinder. Hence the two pistons are in equilibrio, being either of them pressed by the atmosphere. Then I say, if the cock which admits the steam into the antagonist cylinder be opened gradually and not with a jerk, that the first-mentioned [piston in the] cylinder will descend gradually and not less forcibly. Hence, by the management of the steam cocks, the motion may be accelerated, retarded, destroyed, revived instantly and easily. And if this answers in practice as it does in theory, the machine can not fail of success! Eureka!" Boulton went on to partner James Watt and manufacture what were, in their time, the most advanced engines in the world. We'll never know how much Darwin inspired them, but they probably read his 1765 poem, *The Botanic Garden*, in which he wrote:

*Soon shall thy arm, unconquered steam, afar  
Drag the slow barge, or drive the rapid car ;  
On, on wide waving wings, expanded bear  
The flying chariot through the field of air;  
Fair crews triumphant, leaning from above,  
Shall wave their fluttering 'kerchiefs as they move,  
Or warrior bands alarm the gaping crowds,  
And armies shrink beneath the shadowy clouds.*

**Thomas Davenport (1802-1851):** A blacksmith with three years of schooling to his name. Davenport came from a poor background in Vermont, USA, started his apprenticeship at 14 and at 21, in 1824, set up his own smithy. In 1831 he heard that a local ironworks had installed an electromagnet and went to take a look. It lifted six-and-a-half hundredweight of iron (340kg for younger readers) and Davenport was impressed enough to sell his brother's horse to buy a magnet of his own. Before long he had built one for himself, insulating the wire for its coils with silk from his wife's wedding dress. Over the next couple of years he made two more. Then he attached two of them to a rod and set the rod up so it was free to rotate between the other two magnets. Then he attached a battery to the magnets via a commutator (having first designed and made a commutator). And so, in 1834, Thomas Davenport made an electric motor. Two years later he decided to patent his invention. Rather than posting his application he walked to the Patent Office in Washington DC, but during his trek he spent the patent application fee on living expenses so he walked home empty-handed and posted the application. Maybe it arrived, maybe it didn't. We'll never know as the patent office burnt down. Davenport was finally granted his application in 1837 and went on to build a model electric-powered cart, an electric printing press (which he used to print his own magazine, the *Electro-Magnet* and *Mechanics Intelligencer*), an electric piano, an electric telegraph and an electric railway. All of which should have made him rich and famous. But his electric motors were fragile, heavy and expensive; the devices he

powered with them were seen as no more than curiosities. Samuel Morse (who entered Yale College at 14, the same age that Davenport started his apprenticeship), was granted a US patent for his telegraph in 1840, having shown it off to President Martin Van Buren and his cabinet. Davenport died in 1851, aged 48; his sons claimed the cause was a broken heart because Morse had been given credit for inventing the telegraph. But next time you start your bike by pressing a button, spare a thought for Thomas Davenport.

**Dr Alfred Drake:** In 1843 Dr Drake of Philadelphia, USA exhibited a water-cooled horizontal gas engine featuring regulator valves controlled by a governor. The 'lighting gas' was mixed with 10 times its volume of air and ignited by hot-tube ignition. Drake was granted an English patent in 1855. The engine ran at 60rpm and developed about 20hp; it was later converted to run on petrol.

**Drain-pipe merchant:** Slang, circa 1920s, for a motor cyclist who runs a straight-through exhaust and delights in the excessive noise it produces.

**End, The:** Slang, circa 1910, for Land's End.

**Flapper bracket:** Slang, circa 1925, for pillion seat (qv Peach perch).

**Freeling:** Slang, circa 1903, for freewheeling (in the days before footrests had superseded pedals).

**FT:** Abbreviation, circa 1916, for flat twin; sometimes combined with valve configuration, eg OHVFT for overhead valve flat twin. The term 'flat twin', to replace the somehow more formal 'horizontally opposed' was coined by *The Motor Cycle* and resisted by some American motor cycle journalists. *The Motor Cycle* gleefully reported its spread from Europe to the colonies.

**Gas:** Slang for petrol (clearly an abbreviation for gasoline) associated with the USA but also used to describe the vapour produced by a carb. Eg: "The motive power is a 6hp JAP engine, which is supplied with gas from an Amac carburetter." (From *The Motor Cycle* 1915.)

**Gee:** Slang for motor cycle, circa 1914, presumably derived from 'gee-gee', the common term for a horse. Ariel would use the equine link in its advertising slogan 'cheval de fer', iron horse. And more than one motor cycle club used the name 'iron horsemen'.





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**Gills:** Fins, as in cooling, before they were cooled fins, circa 1910.

**Gouged:** Slang for fined for speeding, circa 1930s.

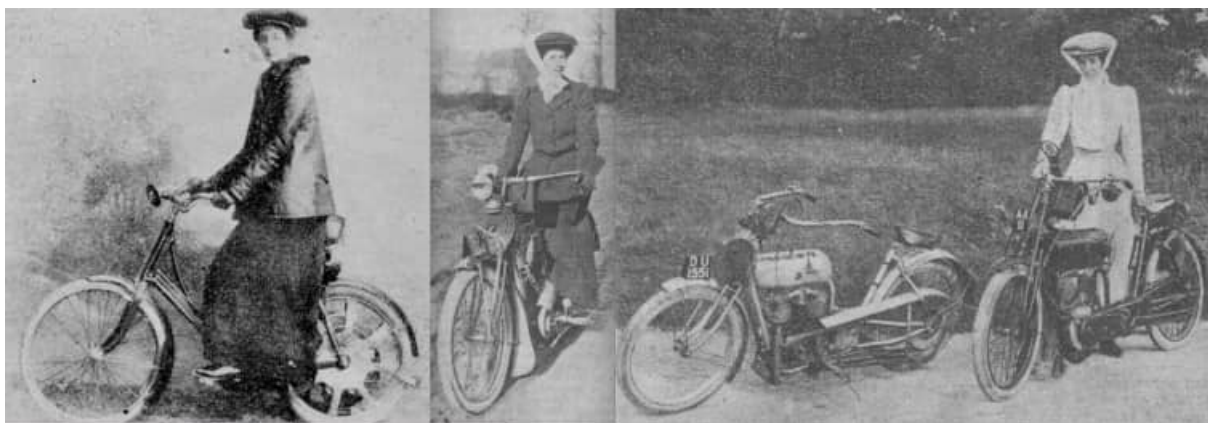
**Grease:** Common usage for mud, circa 1910.

**Green 'Un:** Nickname for *Motor Cycling*, inspired by its green masthead.

**Groovy:** Common usage for someone who is set in their ways, circa 1930s.

**Muriel Hind** [*with passing references to other notable women riders*]: In 1952, as part of *Motor Cycling*'s golden anniversary, Harold 'Oily' Karslake, constructor the the Deadnought and at that time librarian of the Association of Pioneer Motor Cyclists, offered 'A Pen-picture of one of the Most Versatile Motorcyclists of the Early Days—Competitor, designer and Technical Journalist—Muriel Hind': "Fifty years ago, around

the time *Motor Cycling* was about to make its debut, a young lady named Muriel Hind was anxiously awaiting her 21st birthday and delivery of her first motor bicycle, a Singer with a 2hp engine in the rear wheel. Probably the first woman motor bicyclist in the country, if not the world, she was destined to leave a mark on our sport unequalled by any feminine successor. Born of a Dorset county family and orphaned at seven years of age, she was reared by relatives and, although her brother rode one of the 1902 Humbers made under P&M licence, and an uncle rode the earliest vertical-engined Werner, the rest of her relatives looked upon any means of progression other than the horse with horror. So Muriel Hind had to wait for that momentous birthday before she dared assert her will. Having taken delivery of her new model, some two years were spent in acquiring a thorough knowledge of its intricacies, as well as those of another Singer of 3hp, and overcoming some of the prejudices of the times. At this period Rex motorcycles had achieved considerable popularity and, deciding to make her future with motorcycles, a move was made to Coventry. On her arrival there, the Rex Company took an order for their first ladies' model, having to bend their ideas—and their frame—to Miss Hind's very decided views on design. The advent of the original London-Edinburgh Run in 1904 inspired her desire to ride in competitions, and her first move was to join the Motor Cycling Club in April 1905. She took a Singer Tricar through the 1906 Edinburgh Run, gaining the coveted gold medal at her first effort in a trial. This began some years of competition riding, to be ended late in 1912 when romance came with her marriage to Dick Lord of the Rex Company. The latter has been no mean performer in trials, hill climbs and the TT, but with marriage his competition career ended. Incidentally, no insurance company would accept Miss Hind's application when she started riding, and it was some time before the late Ivan B Hart-Davies succeeded in persuading Lloyds underwriters to issue a policy to her. In this connection, in more than 50 years' riding and driving apiece



From left: "Miss Hind photographed on her Singer in 1902. Taken in 1908, this photo shows her on a Rex twin in the London-Holyhead trial of that year. A 1910 picture; Miss Hind is holding her Roc, with rear-wheel hub-clutch, while on the left is seen her 'Blue Devil' 6-7hp Rex—both machines were built to her own specification."



neither Dick Lord nor his wife have ever made an insurance claim—a wonderful record...in the years 1910-1914 Muriel Hind was the writer of a Motor Cycling feature for the 'weaker' sex, 'The Lady Motorcyclist', which influenced a larger number of women to take an active part in the pastime. Such names as Mrs Kennard, Beatrice Langston, Mrs Harry Reed, Mrs de Lissa, Lottie Berend, Mrs CC Cooke and May Walker will come readily to the memory of pioneers. Riding kit in those far-off days consisted of a long-skirted heavy tweed costume, lace-up knee boots, and a large hat secured with a tulle scarf tied in a big bow under the chin. A loose fitting lightweight waterproof overall was carried for rough weather...preserved with care in the garage are a 1914 ladies' model Douglas and the famous old 'Blue Devil', a 7hp twin-cylinder Rex...No one has ever persuaded Mrs Lord to discuss her achievements, but the writer personally watched some of them...Not the least remarkable was in 1920, at the Coventry Motor Club's annual open hill climb. Mrs Hind had ordered a special ladies' model 7hp Rex for the event, but it was not ready in time. I was in charge at the foot of the hill and was asked if she could ride another competitor's mount. 'Yes,' was the answer, 'but not to compete for an award.' EA Gorton, on a twin Rex, had clocked fastest time in his class and offered Miss Hind his machine. We helped her to mount, tucked her skirts round the tank and, with a push of a yard or two, she was off up the hill like a streak. There had been some tumbles due to loose stones and ruts and thus we were delighted and relieved when the news was given out that Miss Hind had beaten Gorton's time by 2.6sec. She got no official award, but the club later presented her with a lovely silver cup as a memento...To be sure, there was occasional adversity, as in the ACU End-to-End Trial of 1908, when the rear wheel of her solo Rex did its best to fall to pieces through broken spokes, but she practically rebuilt that wheel in between a series of hectic sprints to get to checks on time and to qualify for a bronze medal! A capable mechanic, Miss Hind always put the finishing touches to her machines, and doubtless this was a factor in her remarkable run of successes in all types of trials. When adjustments were called for, she could mend punctures or take up a slack belt as quickly as anyone I have ever seen and could 'TT' with the best to make up lost time. A real sport, she would rarely allow another competitor to help with anything...These pages could be filled with a list of events in which she took part before the Kaiser war, not the least of many being the 1908 January Quarterly Trial of the ACU, in which she made fastest time on both the test hills. Pioneers will remember this event, which was run in heavy snow and high winds. At Whitsun that year and on the same machine, she won a gold medal in the London-Edinburgh Run. At an early date, Miss Hind wrote to the editor of *Motor Cycling* suggesting a special column for women motorcyclists, adding that they should have their own motorcycling club. She persuaded manufacturers to make models specially for ladies, and to further this idea, tested these models and wrote most attractive articles around her experiences. Motorcycling for ladies became quite a vogue with the well-to-do, carrying on the tradition of the earlier rage for pedal cycling. Pillion riding began about 1912, but girls did not take to it on a large scale until after the

Kaiser war, which radically altered the lady motorcyclists' outlook on the clothing subject due, no doubt, to the experiences of the girls who became despatch riders in the Services, in which they had to ride men's motorcycles. Before the 1914-18 affair, women could be prosecuted for masquerading in male attire! After that war, a demand arose for lady trials riders and there was no shortage of applicants. At once one's memory leaps to the name of Marjorie Cottle, who did a stupendous 'Round-the-Coast' ride of 3,406 miles on a solo Raleigh in 1924, and for years rode in classic one-day and other trials with great success. There were, of course, many others too many to mention here. Even Brooklands succumbed to the lady rider, where Mrs Stewart secured a number of records. Moreover, she actually rode in a classic road race, the French Grand Prix. In more recent times, a team of three women riders secured the Silver Vase in the 1927 ISDT from under the very noses of the men's teams-Marjorie Cottle, Mrs Mclean (nee Louie Ball) and Edith Foley were the heroines concerned. Furthermore. Florence Blenkiron, Theresa Wallach and Beatrice Shilling each gained Brooklands Gold Stars for lapping the track at over 100mph-a remarkable award for women to win, and one in the true 'Muriel Hind' tradition. In the early days of the MCC lady riders were encouraged, but due to an unfortunate wrangle over an award, no further women members were accepted after about 1908. But Miss Hind, having joined in 1905, retained her membership right through to 1950 when, at the AGM, she was elected an hon life member...quite recently the MCC reopened its membership to ladies and a number now compete in the club's trials again. Furthermore, 'Bemsee' accepted a woman's entry when Olga Kevelos rode in the 'Motor Cycling' race meeting at Goodwood last year. In 1931 Mrs Lord was elected a life member of the Association of Pioneer Motor Cyclists, having held a 1904 motor-cycle driving licence, and, is the only woman member." The last word should go to Muriel. In 1910 she wrote: "I like the feeling of power, life, the mighty rushing wind beating on one's cheeks with the roar of the passing breeze and the beat of the exhaust deafening one's ear. This is the power that drives and here is the motor cycle's charm."

**Hutchis:** Hutchinson waders, first mentioned in the press before the Great War, were fisherman's waders adapted to suit motor cyclists. 'Hutchis' would be a mainstay of all-weather motor cycling for years to come, often combined with a waterproof poncho; the phrase 'Hutchis and poncho' was a commonplace, later superseded by 'stormcoat and waders'.

**IOE:** Inlet over exhaust valve configuration, quite popular until the Great War; more common in the US than Europe

**Intermeeting:** Portmanteau word, circa 1920, an inter-club meeting.

**Ixion:** Nom de plume of Canon BH Davies who wrote for the Blue 'Un from its inception in 1903 until the 1960s. The greatest motor cycle journalist of his or any other generation he was, for decades, at the heart of the motor cycling movement. ('Ixion' is pronounced,

he once explained, 'Icks-eye-on' with the stress on the middle syllable.) You'll find a good selection of his work in the timeline; he also appears on the introduction page (that pic appeared with his article '200 Miles in a Day' which you'll find in the 1903 features section. Ixion wrote on a number of other topics but, though it pains an old atheist like me to admit it, was first and last a man of the cloth, serving as parish priest at St Barnabas Church, St Leonards on Sea from 1926 to 1940. I was privileged to attend the ceremony when a plaque was unveiled there in his memory; the Sunbeam MCC stages an annual run in his name. Ixion's books *Motor Cycle Cavalcade* and *Reminiscences of Motorcycling* are wonderful.



The Rev BH

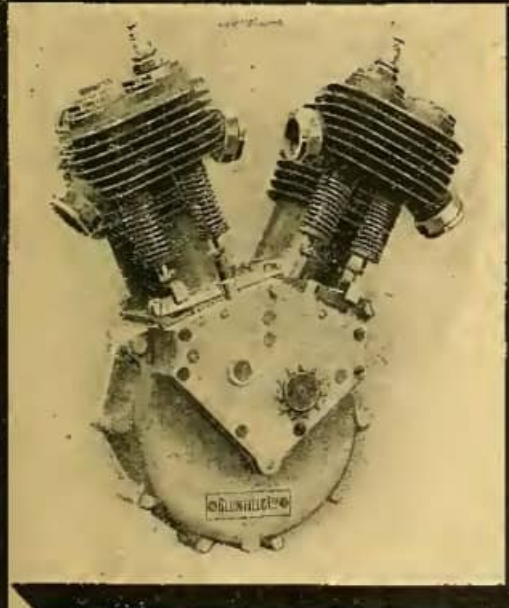
Davies—Ixion. I take great pleasure in the fact that he and I wrote for the Blue 'Un; as a writer and a motor cycle obsessive he is my hero.

**Jehu:** Slang, circa 1910, for the rider of a bicycle or motor cycle; derived from slang for a coach driver. The name appears in the bible; it's link to motoring remains a mystery.

**Jigger:** Slang, circa 1918, for a motor cycle.

**Knut:** Slang, first found 1912, for noisy motor cyclists obsessed with speed, previously known as **Promenade Percies** (qv). Examples of usage: "...as soon as the flashy bounder or "Knut" sees that he himself will be in danger when blinding through traffic on a silent machine he will slow down..." "The 'spell of the knut', as he called it, was over the whole nation, and speed was the chief factor kept in mind by most designers." "I

was informed in every instance that the power and speed were too low to appeal to the public, viz, the 'knuts'." "I was informed in every instance that the power and speed were too low to appeal to the public, viz, the 'knuts'." "Simplification of control and maintenance of power in prolonged use are the factors which weigh most heavily with a majority among us. The open exhaust, dropped bar 'knut' is distinctly over-articulate." "It is a shame that a few would-be 'knuts' and budding motor cycle manufacturers should bring obloquy on us all." "I have often been amused when some member of the 'knut' brigade has 'sprinted' past me on the road, and whom I have overtaken further along repairing a broken belt—a sadder, but perhaps a wiser man." "Anti-Knut' complains that three motor cyclists rode to and fro with cut-outs open in front of Barnet Church last Sunday during divine service. Such behaviour is most reprehensible, and we hope the offenders will not repeat it."



**THE "KNUT" CRACKER**  
**AT OAKAMoor, MAR. 30/12,**  
WAS  
THE **"BLUMFIELD"** 80 x 95  
TWIN  
**FIRST** in CLASS 4, and tied for  
**FASTEST TIME** OF THE DAY  
IN CLASS 5.





Juvenile Knut: "Sit tight, mater, this is rather a bad hill, but you're safe enough where you are!"

**Richard Küchen 1898-1974:** Richard Küchen was born in Bielefeld, the son of a steam engine manufacturer. He trained as an engineer and after WW1 began producing motor cycle engines of his own design; they must have been good as at one point half the proprietary engines sold in Germany were Küchens. As well as engines Küchen

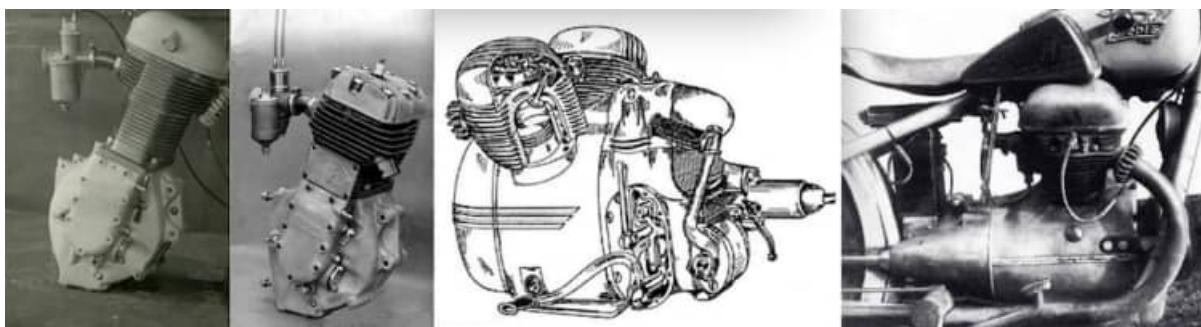
designed complete bikes for more than a dozen German marques. In the early 1920s Küchen's first 'K model' was distinguished by fully enclosed valve gear; in 1924 he introduced vertical cams and rocker arms, and (before Chater Lea, which championed this technique in 1927), desmodromic cams actuating two or four valves. Like Bugatti, Küchen developed a three-valve (two inlet) set-up. In 1931 he moved to Nuremberg to produce a range of four-strokes for Triumph Werke (TWN) but when Triumph also poached Otto Reitz from NSU Küchen moved down the road to Zündapp, a marque which already used his engines. Working with his younger brother Xaver he redesigned Zündapp's entire range—at the 1933 Berlin Motor Show designer Zündapp debuted eight models designed by the Küchen brothers. As well as a relatively



L-R: One of Richard Küchen's first engines, a 500cc three-valve unit, powering a Herbi, built by the Herbig brothers in 1928 in Bad Liebwerda, Bohemia (now Lázně Libverda in the Czech Republic)...And one of his last; in 1955 this 250cc parallel twin with a chain driven camshaft developed 14hp. It was used by Tornax, UT, Motosacoche and, in this case, a New Map. Küchen's trademark chain box. Not as slick, but much cheaper to produce.

conventional 175 there was a family of pressed-steel frames, chain gearboxes and shaft drive. These comprised 200 and 350cc two-stroke singles, a 600cc sidevalve single, 400 and 500cc side-valve flat twins, and two side-valve flat fours. Zündapp also asked Küchen to develop a two-stroke engine capable of competing with the best, namely the flat-piston engines whose patents were held by DKW. Küchen tried to circumvent these patents with inventing a three-transfer scavenger system and it went into production until DKW sued and won. Küchen then took up old idea already patented in 1899 by Joseph Magnat and Louis Debon and came up with the 250cc 'Gegenlaufer' flat twin with four pistons opposed in pairs and controlled by an improbable system of conrods with a single crankshaft. It was never produced; Küchen left Zündapp to spend two years at DKW, from 1934 to 1936, where he developed his ideas on two-stroke scavenging before taking his brother with him on another local move, to Ardie. By 1936 they had come up with a range of five sidevalve, ohv and ohc four-strokes from 250-750cc all of which went into production except for the elegant





L-R: Küchen did Ardie proud with a notably tidy range of engines including the 1936 RBK505 500cc ohv with fully enclosed valve gear and the 1937 sidevalve 500cc KA2/600cc KA4. Transverse V-twin 750 with shaft drive 33 years before the Moto Guzzi V7. This is a rare photo of the Ardie 750 V-twin prototype.

transverse 750cc V-twin elegant with a shaft drive and Küchen's trademark chain box so dear to Küchen. Yet another 'what-if' killed off by war, this was 32 years before the Moto Guzzi 700cc V7. In 1938 the Kitchens returned to Zündapp to develop the KS750 'super-heavy sidecar' from the KS600. The Wermacht compared the KS750 with BMW's R75 BMW, concluding that Zündapp alone should receive the order for military outfits. BMW complained; Zündapp suggested that BMW should build KS750 under licence but BMW, not surprisingly, refused. Both companies supplied bikes but were ordered to keep essential parts interchangeable. KS600s were supplied as solos. After the war Küchen revived his transverse-twin design on a smaller scale, producing the 350cc Bergmeister (and some 50cc two-strokes) for Victoria. Other designs included a 250cc flat twin for Hoffmann, a 125cc 15hp ohv racing engine for Tornax and another 125cc engine for Rabeneick. When scooters became fashionable Küchen designed the DKW Hobby. BMW commissioned a four-cylinder diesel boxer. In 1957 his last major project was a 250cc ohc vertical twin that was used by Tornax in Germany, Motosacoche in Switzerland and New Map in France.



Küchen engine in Zündapp's 1933 Berlin show line-up included a brace a flat-fours. (Right) The first German sidecar with sidecar wheel drive and a diff was not the BMW 750 R75 released in 1941 but this Zündapp KS750 delivered from December 1940.

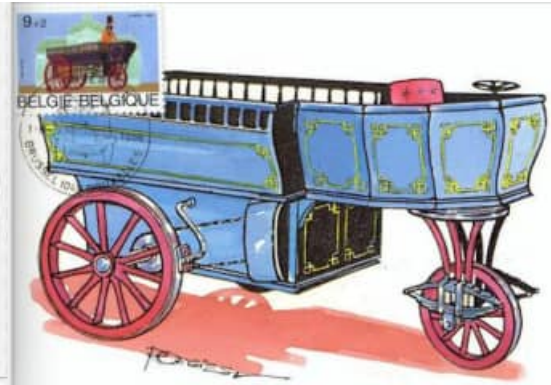
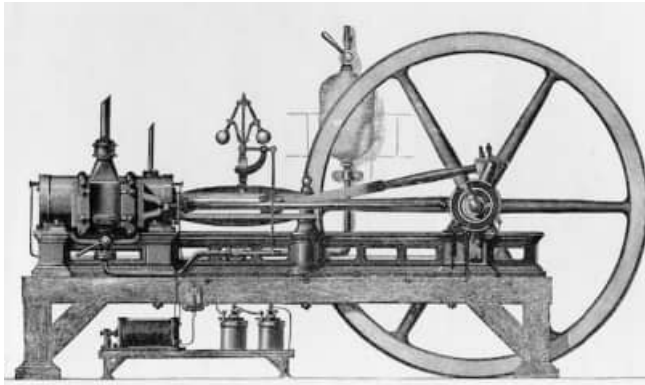


Released in 1952, the Kuchen-powered Victoria Bergmeister was clearly the model for this 1959 Japanese Lilac.

**Phillippe Lebon (1767-1804):** In 1799 Lebon patented, and exhibited, a ‘thermolampe’ fuelled by gas distilled from wood and set the scene for gas-powered lighting and heating. More importantly, to motor cyclists, in 1801 he invented the first internal combustion engine. Wood gas and air were compressed separately ; the mixture was injected alternately to either side of a piston and ignited by an electric spark, driving the piston back and forth like a double acting steam engine. The two pumps and a dynamo were both driven by the engine. Development of Lebon’s engine was curtailed by his murder by ‘prowlers’ while in Paris helping with the preparations for the coronation of Napoleon as emperor.

**Etienne Lenoir (1822-1900):** On 24 January 1860 Frenchman Etienne Lenoir patented the world’s first commercially successful internal combustion engine. It ran on coal gas, which was readily available as a by-product of coke ovens, and was sold with power outputs from about 1hp to 20hp to compete with steam engines in a variety of roles including road transport. In 1863 a 1½ hp 2.5-litre engine was used to power a cart called the *Hippomobile*. It covered the 11km from Paris to Joinville-le-Pont and back in about three hours, including stops for running repairs. Word of this feat attracting the attention of Tsar Alexander II and a *Hippomobile* was sent to Russia, where it vanished. The Lenoir design featured a double-acting layout with spark ignition, though this proved troublesome and Lenoir switched to flame ignition. Although it ran reasonably well, the engine used a lot of gas (about 100cuft per hp per hour), it was noisy and tended to overheat so if sufficient cooling water was not applied it seized. Nonetheless, in September 1860 an over-excited reporter for the Parisian newspaper *Cosmos* wrote that the steam age was over. By 1865 Lenoir had sold 143 engines in in Paris alone and the Reading Gas Works had started to make them (the design was protected by a separate English patent). In all more than 500 were produced on both sides of the Channel, but in 1863 Lenoir sold his patents to Compagnie Parisienne du Gaz. He turned his attention to marine engines motorboats and in 1888 built a four-stroke fuelled by naphtha.

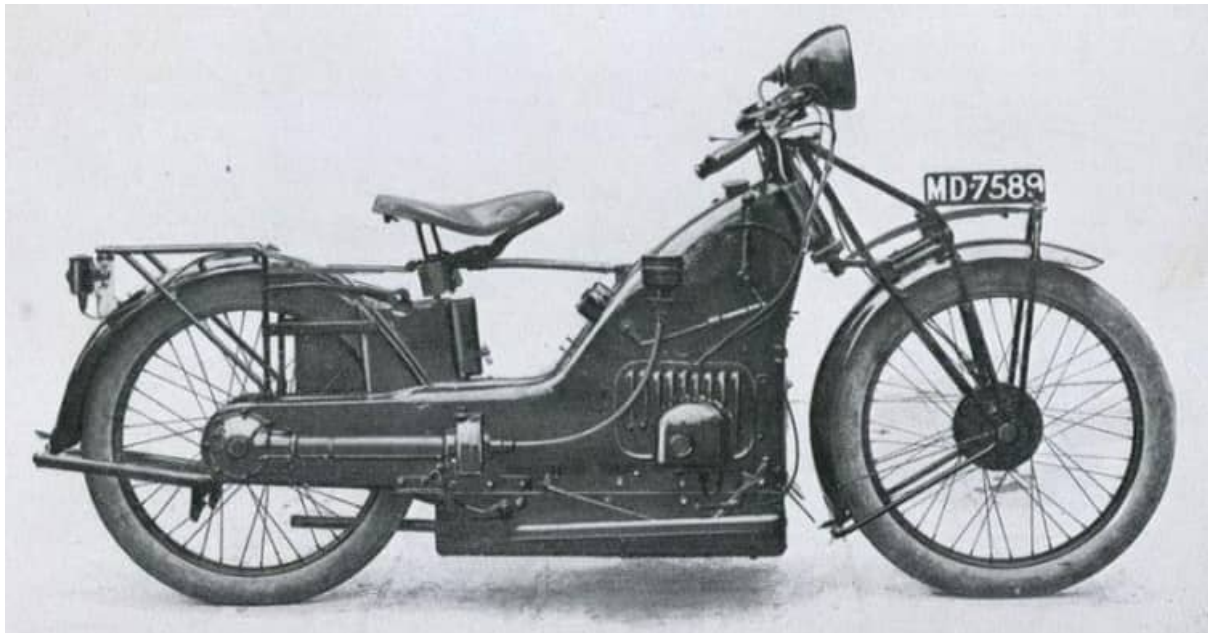




First Etienne Lenoir patented the first successful internal combustion engine, then he used it to power a three-wheeler.

**‘Le tue Belle-mère’:** Slang (French), circa 1906, coined by the manufacturers of the Contal tri-car to describe the front passenger seat; it translates as ‘the kill your mother in law seat’.

**Professor Archibald ‘Archie’ Low:** Archy Low was the archetypical ‘Number 8 Hat. He spent 24 years as chairman of the ACU and chaired the RAC motor cycle committee. He raced successfully at Brooklands and designed a motorcycle of the ‘Everyman’ type. He even rigged a speedway bike with a rocket engine. You can’t have much more of a career in motor cycling than that, but motor cycling was only one of his interests. Archibald Low was born in 1888. He started tinkering and experimenting in boyhood, joined his uncle’s engineering firm, and developed devices such as a fuel injector for internal combustion engines, an egg boiler that whistled to signal the cook, and gas turbines (although his turbine designs could not be supported by the metallurgy of the time). In 1914 he invented ‘televista’ and transmitted moving images up to four miles. The images were fuzzy, the range was short, but this was a working TV system 12 years before John Logie Baird came up with television. If the First World War hadn’t diverted him Low, not Baird, might well have been Mr TV. He appreciated its potential, and not just for entertainment: “There [is] no reason why, when the invention is further developed, the enemy could not be watched from immense distance and all their movements recorded. At sea, too, hostile ships would have their every movement seen. Surprise dashes would be made impossible.”



Archie Low's 1922 design was a motor cycle designed on Everyman lines.

During the Great War Low, with the rank of Captain, served in the Royal Flying Corps as an 'experimental officer', leading a team developing radio controlled aircraft with explosive charges as guided missiles. They also worked on radio and wire-controlled rockets. The Germans took his activities seriously enough to mount a couple of assassination attempts. After the war the Brits lost interest in this technology; the Jerries didn't, as shown by the remote controlled missiles they used against British shipping in the Second World War and the V-weapons. The Germans were reportedly so alarmed by his innovations that two attempts were made on his life, once by shooting at his laboratory, and once by offering him a cigarette later found to be laced with poison. After the war, Low founded his own engineering company, but he was not a good businessperson, and few of his projects came to fruition.



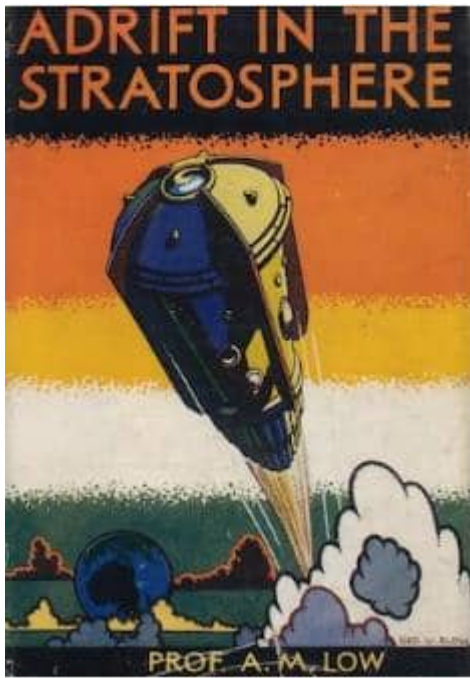
Captain Archibald Low, RFC, led a team which worked on guided missiles.

From 1919-1922 Low served as Associate Honorary Assistant Professor of Physics at the Royal Ordnance College. After which he adopted the title Professor Low. In 1922 he designed an 'Everyman' motorcycle; a term coined, probably, by Ixion of *The Motor Cycle* as part of a decade's-long quest for a motor cycle suited to the 'non-enthusiast': clean and cheap to use, easy to start and ride, incorporating weather protection. The Low Engineering Company's version featured a pressed-steel frame with a fully enclosed four-pot 500cc two-stroke engine and shaft-drive. It could be hosed down like a car and was, in Low's words, designed to be ridden by both "men in white tennis pants as well as women in skirts". Low was a futurist; in 1933 he wrote a feature for *Motor Cycling* predicting what motor cycles would like like in 1953 (you'll find it in the timeline, 1933). In 1953 he joined the nascent British Interplanetary Society (he was its president from 1936 to 1951, and was inducted into the International Space Hall of Fame in 1976).



Among Low's skills was an ability to persuade a rider to sit on a rocket-propelled speedway bike.

In 1947 he bolted four solid-fuel rockets to a speedway bike which lapped Wembley speedway track though this wasn't quite a first; Fritz von Opel strapped six solid-fuel rockets to the back of a 496cc Neander in 1928 (check out that year in the timeline). Prof Low didn't only predict the future of motor cycling. In various articles he wrote four science fiction novels and looked forward to mobile phones, smartphones, the internet, space stations, space travel, telecommunications satellites and, rather whimsically, wrote: "Dancing in the future would probably be enjoyed in an armchair, with a seat swaying slightly, lights lowered, and possibly some drug. People would be too lazy to dance, and they would have to achieve the sensation in an armchair."

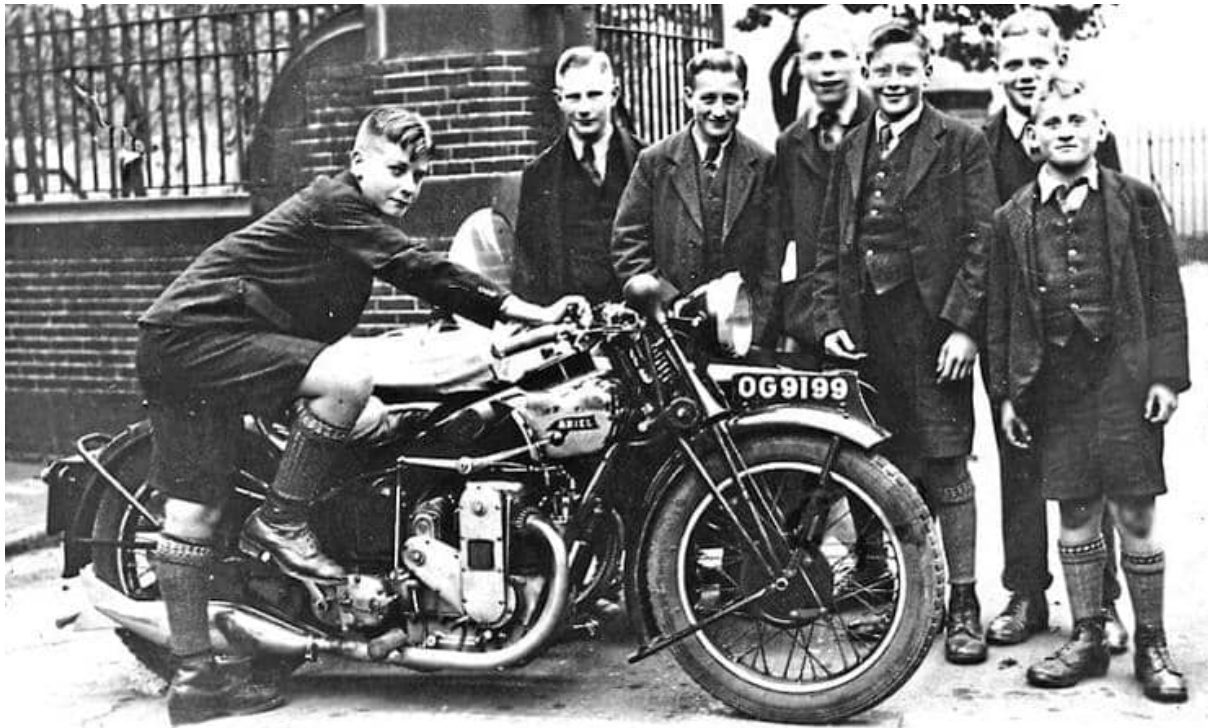


In 1937 Archie Low published *Adrift in the Stratosphere*, an interplanetary adventure for youngsters.

**MOIV:** Manually operated inlet valve; eg a valve opened by a cam and closed by a spring (unless it's desmodromic) (qv AOIV).

**Manxland:** Slang (UK), circa 1910, for Isle of Man.

**Maudes Trophy:** Maudes Motor Mart was a major motor cycle and car dealership based in Great Portland Street in London's West End (once at the heart of the motor cycle trade). In 1923 proprietor George Pettyt presented the ACU with a silver trophy to be awarded annually to the manufacturer which achieved the most impressive 'endurance test'. Norton won for the first three years; BSA snapped up the trophy in 1926 (for 60 climbs of Belch y Groes) followed by Ariel. No Maudes Trophy was awarded in 1929 but Ariel stole the limelight when HS Perrey and FE Thacker crossed the Channel in three-and-a-half hours aboard a 497cc twin. They must have enjoyed the experience because they turned round and rode home. In 1930 it was Dunelt's turn (for covering 13,119 miles on The Island in 16 days). Ariel bounced back in 1931 with seven stunts involving seven models. A 350cc sidevalve lapped Brooklands for seven hours, covering 368 miles; an ohv 350 did 700 miles on seven bob's worth of petrol and oil; a 550cc sidevalve was decoked in 4min 19sec (well under the seven-minute target) using only spanners from the standard toolkit;



Ariel's 'sevens' stunt was a particularly imaginative route to the Maudes Trophy: these nippers proved the Squariel was an easy-starter.

a 500cc ohv four-valve 500 covered 80 miles in an hour (well over the 70-mile target); a 550cc sloper ran on public roads for 70 minutes in each of its four gears; a 500cc ohv sloper combo made seven ascents of seven famous hills including Porlock and Beggar's Roost; and seven schoolboys were each invited to kick-start a Square Four seven times. It started first kick on 48 out of the 49 attempts, and then went on to complete 700 miles in 670 minutes (beating its 700-minute target). Triumph took the trophy in 1933 when its new (and short lived) 650cc 6/1 vertical twin hauled a sidecar round Brooklands for 500 miles in 498min—it also won silver in the ISDT. Next year P&M won the Maudes when a humble 250cc Red Panther averaged over 35mph in a run to Land's End at a thrifty 115mpg. After a three-year gap Triumph took the honours in 1937 when Tigers 70, 80 and 90 lapped Brooklands at 66.4, 74.7 and 82.3mph respectively. Beeza took over the following year with a 600cc sidevalve M21 combo and a 500cc ohv Empire Star—soon to win glory as the Gold Star. As well as 40 ascents of Bwlch y Groes and acceleration, speed





It didn't win a Maudes, but Ariel's cross-channel jaunt certainly stole the limelight.

and braking tests at Brooklands, the Beezas traversed London from north to south and east to west in top gear. In 1939 Triumph was keen to publicise its new vertical twins. A Speed Twin and a Tiger 100 proved themselves with a run from John o' Groats to Land's End followed by a six-hour blast round Brooklands. The first post-war trophy went to BSA. Three A7 Star Twins were ridden to Austria, where they picked up gold medals in the ISDT, followed by a run to Oslo where all three averaged better than 80mph over a standing quarter. They reached home after nearly 5,000 trouble-free miles apiece—and that was the last time a British marque won the Maudes Trophy. No-one went after the trophy for the next decade; in 1962 a trio of Honda 50s lapped Goodwood non-stop for a week, clocking up an aggregate 15,800 miles. BMW became the next winner, in 1973, when a brace of R75/5 twins lapped The Island for a week. The following year Suzuki took the honours with its new range of two-stroke triples: a GT380, GT550 and GT750 were ridden three times round the coastline of Britain. After which no challenges were mounted for 20 years. In 1994 three Yamaha FZR 600s averaged over 100mph in the Supersport 600 TT—and at the time of writing Yamaha still holds the trophy because since then there have been no attempts to win it. As motor cycles have evolved to a standard of reliability that could only be dreamed of when the Maudes Trophy was first up for grabs, it's not easy to think of a reliability stunt that would justify its revival.



There was no point winning the Maudes Trophy if you didn't spread the good word and here (minus its lid) is the trophy itself.

**Mechorn:** Slang for 'audible means of approach' circa 1920 (presumably abbreviated from 'mechanical horn'). It was operated by pressing a knob and became known by the generic name Klaxon. Superseded by electric horns some of which imitate the sound of a mechorn, often transcribed onomatopoeiacally in English as 'awooga'.



Ixion called it a mechorn; it's better known now as a Klaxon. All together now: "AROOGA! AROOGA! AROOGA! DIVE DIVE DIVE!"

**Mote:** Slang, verb (UK) circa 1900, for ride or drive, presumably abbreviated from 'motor'.

**Number Eight Hat:** Slang (UK) circa 1920s-1950s for technical experts (who the tabloid press used to call 'boffins').

**Oilies:** Slang (UK) circa 1910 for oilskins.

**Olieslagers, Jan (1883-1942):** When Belgian bicycle manufacturer S de Jong & Co fitted a ZL engine into one of their Minerva bicycles the first person to start and ride it was a 17-year-old mechanic named Jan Olieslagers. That was in 1900. Within two years he became the first rider to top 100km/hr and was described as world champion motor cyclist. Riding everything from sub 50kg racers to huge bicycle pacers Olieslagers was almost unbeatable and earned the enviable nom de guerre 'The Antwerp Demon'. His reputation spread to the New World: when he raced at the Buffalo Velodrome in 1908 the organisers had to give the rest of the field a 640yd start in a 3½-race to make the event interesting [you'll find an interview with the demon in 1908]. Presumably in search of new challenges, in 1909 Olieslagers teamed up with his brothers Jules and Max to buy a Bleriot XI monoplane and by 1913 had set seven world records. As soon as the Great War broke out Germany invaded Belgium and the Olieslagers joined up. Sergeant (later Lieutenant) Jan Olieslagers had a busy war. In 1915 a crash landing left him with arm, leg and chest injuries. Before year's end he became the first Belgian pilot to claim a victory by forcing down a German scout plan with his Nieuport which was dubbed



Demon, just like its pilot. By 1918 he had earned a reputation as a nursemaid for rookie pilots, had spent time in a coma following another crash, and had made 518 sorties, engaging in 97 dogfights with six confirmed kills—but he was uninterested in making claims and his actual tally was probably nearer 30. Belgium's leading ace, Willy Coppens, gave Olieslagers a new nickname: "Jan sans Peur" (Fearless Jan). Following demobilisation Olieslagers opened a garage; in 1923 he was largely responsible for the opening of Antwerp airport—his statue still stands by the entrance. When Olieslagers died, in 1942, the Germans were back in Belgium and had banned the Belgian national anthem and any display of the Belgian flag. But as a mark of his nation's regard, Olieslagers' casket was draped with the flag and the anthem was played in his honour. No one better exemplified the links between motor cycling and aviation, or the profound contribution motor cyclists of all nations made to their countries' military, on the ground and in the air.



Jan Olieslagers: On his 7hp Minerva in 1905, in his Bleriot monoplane in 1909, and with his Nieuport fighter 'Le Demon'.

PS Olieslagers was also an expert marksman who is described by the US National Rifle Association as the "Father of Aerial Combat". This part of his story falls outside the scope of this timeline (except for the fact that BSA followed his suggestions about improving the Lewis gun). You can find more about his exploits and inventions at <http://www.americanrifleman.org/content/the-devil-of-antwerp-father-of-aerial-combat-jan-olieslagers/>



Just a few of The Demon of Antwerp's medals: Order of Leopold II, Croix de Guerre, French Legion d'Honneur and Croix de Guerre, Russian Order of Saint Stanilas.

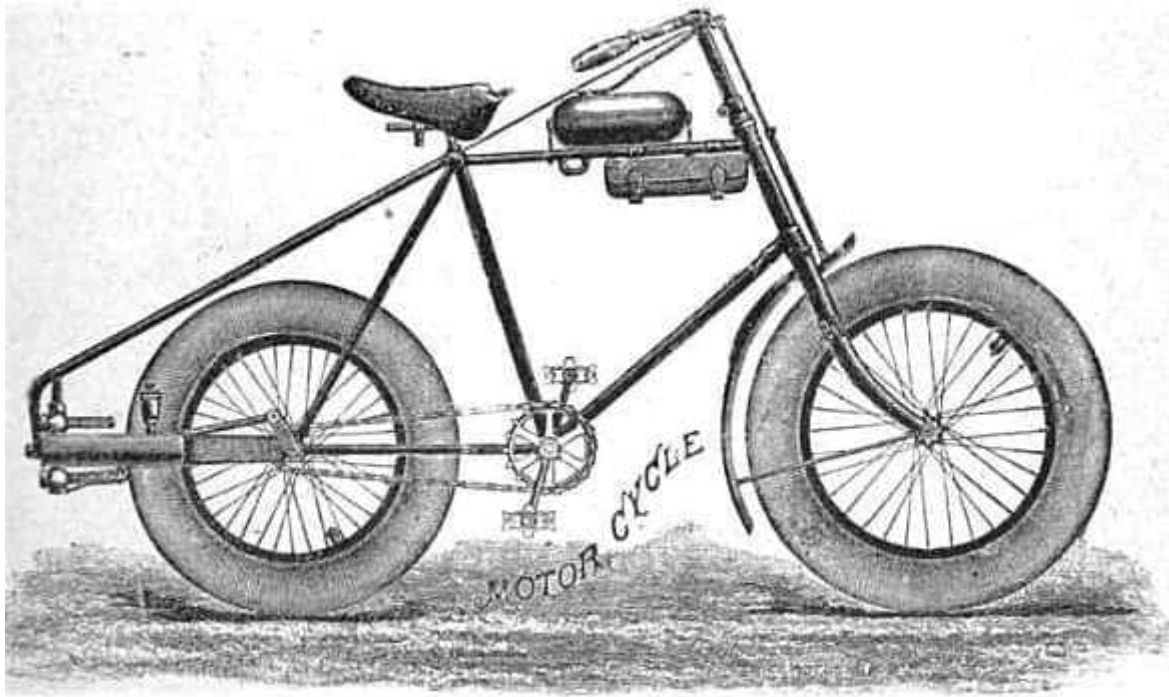
**One-lunger:** Slang (UK), dating back at least as far as 1910, for a single-cylinder motorcycle.

**Opposite class:** Slang (UK), circa 1930s, for sidecar class in sporting events.

**Pedestrian slicer:** Slang (UK), circa 1960s, for front number plate mounted on the front mudguard.

**Pennington, Edward Joel (1858-1911):** Entrepreneur, self-publicist, showman, and arguably the greatest conman in the history of powered transport. He has been credited with coining the word 'motorcycle' as early as 1893; he crossed the Atlantic to flog some dodgy patents to Britain's sharpest vehicle entrepreneur for an astonishing amount of money, ducked, weaved, philandered, sued, was sued and, truth be told, did little to advance the evolution of the motor cycle. But just because I enjoy a good yarn as much as the next motor cycle obsessive, here are some random episodes in his life, culled from contemporary press reports. *The Chicago Times*, for example, urged its readers to "travel back in time to an earlier quainter Milwaukee of rumbling beer wagons, old world accents, and cream brick architecture. To a day in 1895 when the wildly outlandish but visionary American inventor EJ Pennington brought the latest product of his dubious genius to Milwaukee: a gasoline-powered bicycle that 'moted' by internal fire...Calling his invention The Motor Cycle, Pennington demonstrated his improbable device in the downtown Milwaukee neighborhood where 14-year-old Bill Harley and Art Davidson were then living in their boyhood homes. Contemporary accounts tell of the street mobbed with spectators as The Motor Cycle blazed up and down Grand Avenue at a peak velocity of 58 miles per hour! While that speed claim was almost certainly spurious and Pennington's crude machine soon forgotten as Milwaukee settled back into its late 19th century beery slumber, this fantastical but real event may have inspired the 'dream' that young Harley and Davidson held fast in their minds to take the work out of bicycling by building a motorcycle of their own...During 1894 he joined Thomas Kane

who made kerosene engines widely used in dairies for milk separation. This event is most important. Here, in Racine on the shores of lake Michigan they financed a really large concern for the development of petrol engines. They patented among other things an 'electric igniter' for petrol driven engines which was really the first sparking plug, in 1895. In this year Pennington visited England and took some of his vehicles with him. Exercising his well-known assurance and charm he persuaded Henry J Lawson, a successful manufacturer of bicycles to purchase patents to the tune of a half a million dollars. He was still here in 1896 and entered the Brighton Run. After an altercation with M Leon Bollee his claim to have won the event was not disputed. After this he participated in the aerial demonstrations in the USA late in 1896 and during 1897." *The Autocar*, launched in November 1895 by Iliffe Press, was the elder sibling of *The Motor Cycle*: "We have already spoken in these columns of the Pennington engine which is attracting so much attention in America, and a few words concerning its construction will doubtless not be without interest to the readers of *The Autocar*...the engine was first publicly experimented with about a year ago, and is the outcome of a series of successive developments which have been made in light engines by Thomas Kane and Company, of Chicago, Illinois, USA, who ten years since went into the business of manufacturing light machinery for the propulsion of boats and launches...the Pennington engine, which has been successfully used on motor cycles and light carriages is now built by the firm for all lines of work. Ordinary gasoline or kerosene oil is stored in a galvanised iron tank...A small primary battery is placed in any convenient position out of the way from which a copper wire leads into the interior of the engine. It is a well-known law that rapid evaporation of any fluid produces cold; the more rapid the evaporation the more intense the cold.



MOTOR BICYCLE WITH PENNINGTON ENGINE.

From *The Autocar*, December 1895: note the use of the word 'motor cycle'.



Some of those early Penningtons actually saw use: this example is in the hands of "well-known Coventry schoolmaster, Mr WM Turrall".

Pennington's engine utilises this principle, and on the motor cycle no water is used for cooling purposes...In all other engines of the gas or vapour type the explosive fluid is compounded and produced in the engine, by means either of a vapouriser or carburetter, and when thus prepared is pumped into the engine and there exploded. This produces only heat, and renders a water jacket necessary, as well as a large quantity of water for cooling purposes. The Pennington engine produces both heat and cold, as above described, and in such proportion that the temperature of the cylinder is never greater than that of an ordinary steam engine, and requires a minimum quantity of water. In a three-quarters horse power engine there is only one cylinder, two horse power two cylinders, and in a four horse power four cylinders. Each cylinder is 2in in diameter, 6in stroke. The engine runs five hundred or more revolutions per minute as desired. The whole mechanism is extremely simple in construction, and is designed to be ignoramus proof. There are said to be fourteen chances for a locomotive engine to get out of order and fail to work. In an electric car motor twenty-two chances. In the Pennington engine there are but two, viz, the flow of fluid, and the electric spark. Both are very easily tested, and when both work properly the machine is bound to go...In the motor bicycle no balance wheel is required, the start being effected by the pedals in the usual manner. As soon as the engine gets to work, it expected to develop fully one horse power, probably more, and over-runs the pedals, which are connected with a ratchet gearing, and the rider can either pedal faster, and so keep ahead of the engine, and do some of the work of propulsion himself, or else put his feet on the rests, and 'coast' all the time...By turning a button on the handle-bar, the electric current is shut off, and instantly the cylinders convert themselves into air brakes. The bicycle, which has 4in tyres, thus obtaining the acme of comfort in riding, is, of course, built specially strong to stand the strain, yet with all this, and with engine and attachments complete, it weighs but 65lb, the weight of the





THE Pennington Autocar Motor-Tricycle built by the Great Horseless Carriage Co in 1896.

engine and attachments alone being only 12lb. The electric battery will last for months, and is easily recharged or renewed, whilst one charge of petroleum is sufficient for a run of from fifty to one hundred miles. As to speed, the company claim to have done a mile in 58 seconds and put the road speed down at from six to fifty miles per hour...Doubtless practical engineers will be asking about efficiency, and whether the horse power of these little engines is actual or merely nominal. It may, therefore, be interesting if we quote the following extract from a letter received from Mr Kane last week: 'The invention grows upon us all as we make further trials with larger engines. To illustrate, a few days ago we tested one of our old type of cast iron engines rated two and a half horse power. Under our old system of introducing gas it developed about two horse power in regular running. Putting in one spark and taking the fluid directly into the cylinder, it developed 28 horse power. Substituting an electrode with a double spark it developed 18 horse power.' We fancy our readers will agree with us that on the face of it the Pennington engine seems to have about solved the motor question for light vehicles, more especially as ordinary petroleum crude oil is used instead of the more expensive and more explosive benzoline. We may add that the English patents have been purchased by an English syndicate for a very large sum, a larger sum, we believe, than has ever been paid for any other petroleum motor patent...No engines are at present in England, but we understand that Mr Pennington leaves America to-day, bringing several specimens of the carriages with him, and that the public will ere long have the opportunity of seeing the vehicles at work...In the columns of *The American Machinist*, Mr John Randol, who, we understand, is an expert of some standing in American engineering circles, gives the following interesting report on the Pennington engine: 'I



saw, I say, a heat engine of such exquisite simplicity that a child might easily remember all of its few parts and their uses, and all so small and light that a child might use them for playthings; a machine so absurdly lacking in all the parts and appliances which I had been trained by example and theory to believe essential to the effectiveness of motors of its class, that if previous knowledge were not wholly error, this new wonder should not be able to even move itself; yet this incredible machine not only did move itself, but moved with such vigour of action as to drive loads far beyond its apparent possibilities...I know also that all the experts who have been employed by capitalists to examine this engine have been first incredulous and then amazed, and, finally, enthusiastic...No fire, no water, no boiler, no carburetter—only a few pieces of steel, with a few brass-bushed joints, a battery weighing one pound, and a gallon of kerosene; put these with a bicycle, bringing the weight of the whole piece of wizardry up to 581b and a man may be carried by it on a smooth road a mile in fifty-eight seconds, as a man was carried on one of the asphalt-paved streets in the city of Milwaukee a few days since...to give adhesion, and to avoid puncture, the pneumatic

**Price**  
**F. O. B.**  
**SYRACUSE,**  
**N. Y.**  
**\$600.00**

**“IT RIDES LIKE A  
PULLMAN”  
STEARNS<sup>1</sup>**  
Steam Carriage  
Model A  
Runabout

One of nine Models Illustrated Catalog on application

**STEARNS STEAM CARRIAGE CO., SYRACUSE, N. Y.**

Here's a strange coincidence: in 1900 a 100 enthusiasts paid \$600 apiece for a Stearns steamer. Within months of Pennington's arrival the entire company sold for \$600.

tyres are made four inches diameter, after Pennington's specifications, and cannot be injured by a hammer and nail in skilled hands; the attempt to drive the nail into the inflated tyre results in a simple rebound of the nail. I was one of the riders on a Pennington tandem weighing 1061b over a poor block pavement, railway tracks, etc; the time was not taken; it was quite sufficiently swift, however, to satisfy all my longings for speed...Mr Pennington informed me that he would not be a competitor in the *Times-Herald's* Milwaukee, Chicago, \$5,000 prize race, as he preferred some of his customers should take the money..." In December 1896 Pennington moved to England; in the June 1897 issue of the *Horseless Age Magazine* he issued "A Challenge to the World: I, EJ Pennington, of the Motor Mills, Coventry, issue the following challenge to the world. It was my first intention, as announced a few weeks back, to challenge the makers of the winning vehicle in the Paris-Marseilles race, but from accidents and other causes several good carriages were unable to do their designers and makers full justice in that contest, so I have decided to throw my challenge open to the world, as I desire to meet the best and most efficient autocars that have yet been produced. I therefore challenge any bona-fide makers of autocars in the world to a speed contest and mechanical trial against one of my machines...each concern entering for the competition (who must be bona-fide builders of motor vehicles) and myself to deposit in Lloyd's Bank, Ltd, 72 Lombard Street, London, £1,000 sterling, subject to the order of the judges of the competition...The race shall be over a continuous course of 1,200 English miles...The race to take place on a track at least one mile in circumference, or on a properly banked course, and to be within 100 miles of London, England, at a place to be selected by the Motor Car Club, London..." In its October 1897 issue *The Horseless Age* reported the Pennington's next gambit: "EJ Pennington is now giving his attention to the Parisian public. He is breathing out challenges to all comers to meet him on a 2,000 mile course for a purse of 5,000 pounds. None of the French manufacturers took up the challenge because they did not feel warranted in risking so large a sum of their stockholder's money on a mere chance. A

# THE TRACTOBILE.

Simple.

Trusty.

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SALES DEPARTMENT

**PENNSYLVANIA STEAM VEHICLE CO., Inc.,**

CARLISLE, PA.

One of Pennington's many dodgy ventures: the Tractobile.

resident of Lyons, however, an amateur, accepted the challenge on condition that the distance be reduced to 600 miles. This Mr Pennington will not accede to. Meanwhile Mr Pennington is reported to have had a brush with the Count de Dion on one of the boulevards, and to have come out second best. It seems hardly probable that he will be more successful in securing a race in France than he was in England." *The Autocar's* launch editor was sacked for "undisclosed financial improprieties" (he took bribes from Pennington). Under new management, the *Autocar* later confided: "A very entertaining book could be written of Mr Pennington's brief but lively career in the British automobile industry. His personality was such that not only was he able to inspire confidence in the public, from whom orders for his marvellous cars flowed in at an astonishing rate, but he induced quite a number of old-established firms to lay down plant to manufacture the same. In fact, in July 1899 he announced that no less than

eleven firms were engaged in their construction. Whether all or even the majority of these turned out any cars, it is difficult to say..." By the end of 1899 Pennington was back in the US; he and Harry Lawson had formed the Anglo-American Rapid Vehicle Company. A well informed Yankee pundit wrote: "All signs point to a resuscitation of the Anglo-American Rapid Vehicle promotion in Philadelphia. The Pennington war machine is now getting itself arrested there, as it did in the vicinity of New York some time ago. Gibbs, the well known stock-jobber of the City of Brotherly Love, identified with this scheme in its inception, has been relieved of his official duties in several other watered corporations of which he was the chief promoter, and now has leisure to devote to the automobile project. The widows, the orphans and the omnipresent gudgeon in finance will again be invited to bite." New century, new scam. The electrically powered Stearns car was built in Syracuse, NY by EC Stearns. In 1900 it switched to steam power; the Stearns Automobile Co had a capital stock of \$1,000,000. In its first year 100 cars were sold and the firm had a bright future. Then Mr Stearns met Mr Pennington. The Stearns Automobile Co became a subsidiary of the Anglo-American Rapid Vehicle Co; within a year it was broke and sold for \$600. Pennington moved on to launch The Tractomobile, described, in 1903, by *The Horseless Age*: "The American Automobile Company, of London, England (American Works, Racine, Wis), the latest promoting scheme of the notorious EJ Pennington, is sending out and has been distributing at the recent Tri-State Vehicle Show at Cincinnati a circular addressed to the carriage trade, which reads, in part, as follows: 'Do you want to make money? If so, come and see us. Instead of making less than \$100 on each vehicle, why not triple it by buying one of our automobile attachments by which you can realize from \$200 to \$400 profit? We are not automobile or carriage builders, but we build the automobile horse or locomotive which is applied to the horse drawn vehicle the same as is a horse—viz, we draw and steer with our locomotive attachment applied to any horse drawn vehicle as does the horse. We are the oldest automobile manufacturers in England and amongst the oldest on the Continent, having devoted over twelve years to the business. We have also taken out over 400 patents throughout the world on automobiles, etc. Our shareholders in

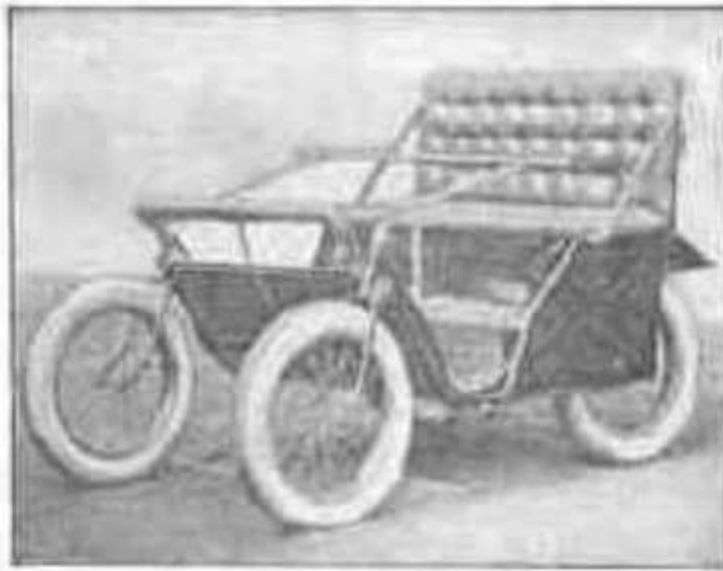
# MOTOR CYCLES

ONE, TWO AND  
THREE SEATED.



TANDEM<sup>AND</sup>  
VICTORIAS.

*Speed, Safety, Comfort and Economy  
Combined.*



VICTORIA  
With 4 H.P. & Cylinder Engine—

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RACINE, WISCONSIN.

In

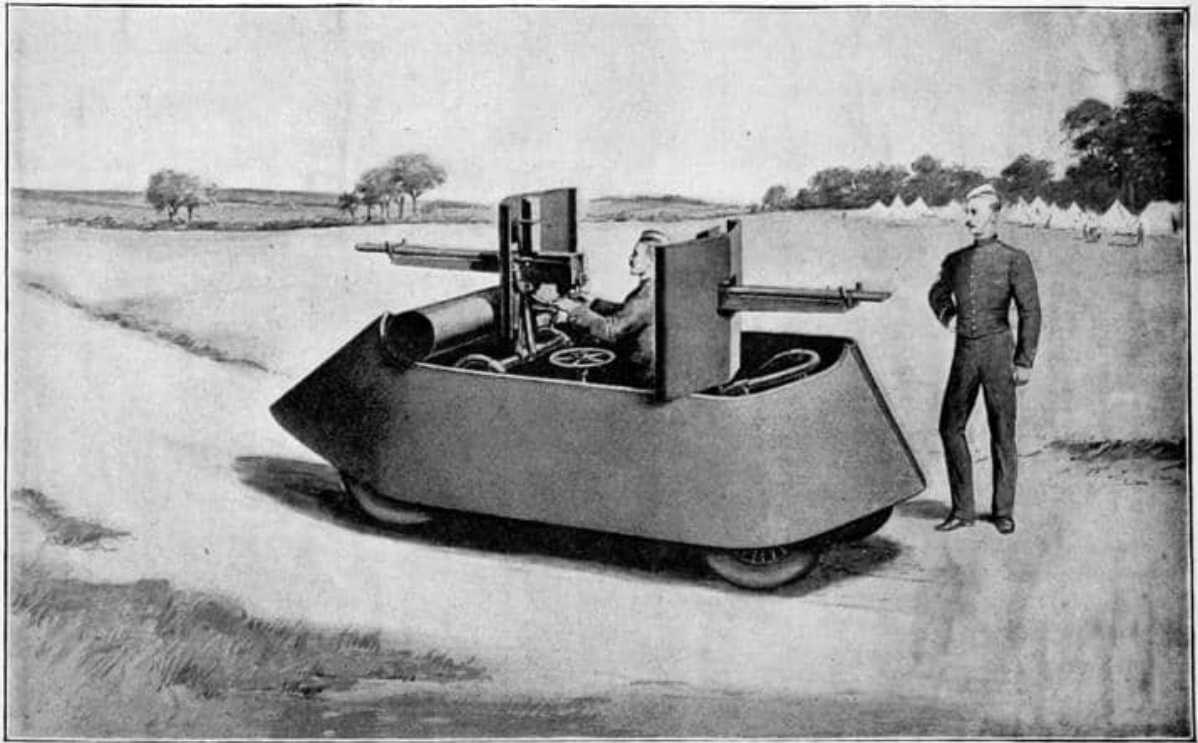
1903 Pennington promised to triple motor dealers' profits with the Racine.

England have decided to spend \$1,500,000 in putting in more machinery and equipment, so that by next year we hope to be able to turn out 50,000 locomotives. We have now over sixty customers in this country—none of them ordering less than 100 outfits—and shall have over 400 by March 1.' The scheme of giving exclusive territory—for a cash deposit—has been 'worked' before in the automobile line in this country by irresponsible parties, and it is to be hoped that none of the vehicle dealers or vehicle manufacturers may fall into the trap laid for them. Pennington has been exploiting the ignorance of the general public in motor matters for over a decade; he has organized in

succession the Pennington Motor Foreign Patents Syndicate, Limited, the Anglo-American Rapid Vehicle Company, the Pennsylvania Steam Vehicle Company, the American Automobile Company, etc, with an aggregate capitalization of over a hundred million dollars, but is not known ever to have placed a practical vehicle in the hands of a purchaser. None of his vehicles have ever taken part in any road contest in this country, nor abroad as far as our knowledge goes, and in view of this fact the vehicle men will do well to think twice before they listen to the claims of this combine. If they want any further particulars about the career of Pennington the back volumes of *The Horseless Age* will be of service to them.” In 1906 *The Horseless Age* gleefully reported:

“Pennington, of whom there is but one although he is of ever so many, which is equivalent to saying that the inventor of places, has bobbed up again. ‘World heaters’ has another revolutionizer by means of which he is going to corral the dollars of those not so worldly wise as he...Since *The Motor World* devoted so much space to his wonderful vibrationless motor that would run on anything from garbage to condensed milk, and the equally wonderful Standard Oil Automobile Company, of St Louis, which he assisted in exploiting a year or so ago, Pennington has been heard of but little. He cropped up in Ohio and in Michigan. with a sparkling spark plug and a bottless truck but it was only for a day. But a man as irrepressible as he cannot long remain inactive, so it is not surprising that Pennington and a scheme—the two are inseparable—should have bobbed up again, with the same suavity of manner and with the same high silk hat and iron grey hair topping his six feet of noble bearing. This time Pennington’s fancy runs to touring cars, and he is going to have them equipped with his wonderful sixteen horsepower motor and ready for the market early in June. As the car will sell for only \$300 very naturally everybody in the country will want to possess one, and, of course, the generous Pennington will almost surely give everybody that has a few loose dollars the chance of their lifetime and permit each of them to get in on the ground floor earl. Just what his new marvel is like, Pennington does not disclose; he realizes the value of mystery. For ‘world beaters’ and multifarious money making schemes, Pennington is probably without an equal an equal and there are few who have had as interesting a career, the complete details of which probably will never become known. Pennington, when he talks to reporters who do not know him, takes upon himself the credit of having in, or invented the first working automobile in this country...Although he displayed his whizzlet in sumptuous offices in New York’s banking district and helped exploit a many

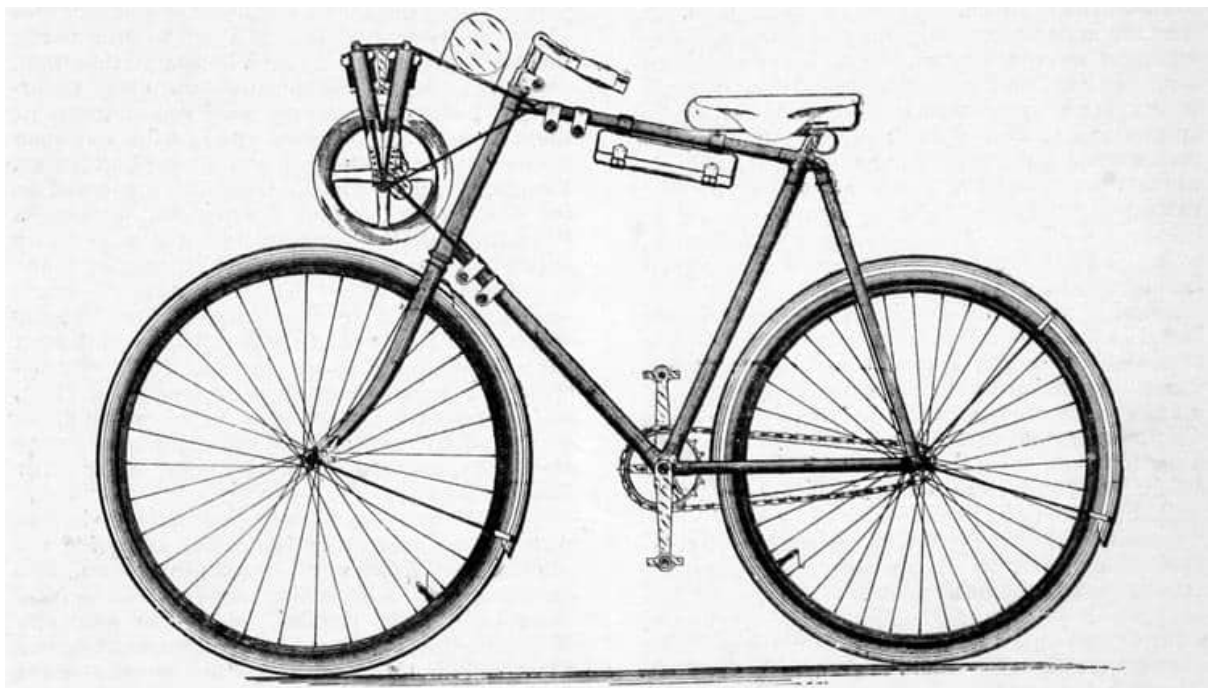




The 'New Pennington Fighting Autocar' terrorised some pedestrians but never saw action.

millioned rapid transit company, 'bites' were scarce and he failed to interest capital and was practically driven out of the country, taking his patents and machines and going to Europe. Here he succeeded and became a millionaire, it is said...He gave King Edward of England his first ride in an automobile and also other titled Europeans—of course, he did! Over there he even mixed up with another 'wizard' who was so foolish as to land in prison. Pennington's wealth dwindled away and he returned to America practically 'dead broke'. Since then he has had an up and down career, and tales of his numerous matrimonial tangles and at least some of his other ventures and the ensuing unpleasant features have been published. But Pennington is now 'wizarding' again and will probably continue to do so until he finds it desirable to seek pastures new and on which tenderer lambs are given to gamble." Pennington's later career was summed up in an obituary in the *New York Times* of 10 March 1911 under the headlines 'Thousands Invested Their Money In His Visionary Schemes and Got Nothing in Return'...'His Career Remarkable for the Fact That He Rarely Got into the Toils of the Law': "Pennington went to Springfield last Fall. He said that he was an inventor of international reputation and was trying to promote an airship school in that city. He also said that a local motor cycle company company [presumably Indian, Springfield being its hometown] owed him \$500,000 in royalties...The career of Pennington appears to have been one of wild adventures of the 'get-rich-quick' variety. From the day when he founded a wooden pulley company on \$5,000 capital advanced—but never recovered—by a truckman, through the period when he peddled the factory from one town to another, always profiting by the change, though the townspeople lost, up to the final venture two years ago, when he came to New York

and actually got well-known financiers to subscribe to the incorporation of a \$50,000,000 scheme to manufacture airships 1,250 feet in length, capable of making 9,000 miles in a single voyage, his plans, success, and lavish manner of living made him seem like a character out of the Arabian Nights...” Pennington’s other scams had included a 100mph monorail from Chicago to Cleveland (that cost the people of Fort Wayne \$125,000); a plan to build freight elevators (that cost Oswego, Kansas \$1,000,000); and a fund raising scheme to thank Passavant Hospital in Pittsburgh for successfully treating one of his three wives (he skipped town with the cash without paying the hospital bill). Referring to his time in England, the obit added: “With his British Aerial War Syndicate he is said to have interested the Government. He was progressing well and had got half a million [from Harry Lawson] when a company organised for £400,000 got him into difficulties with the



Pennington Sturmev Motor Cycle of 1897.

head of the Humber Bicycle Company and he was forced into the Bankruptcy Court. A publishing company and even a firm on the Isle of Man appeared against him. He left England suddenly. The head of the bicycle company came to this country, only to find that there was nothing on which he could base a criminal proceeding.” In May 1901 the *Vincennes Daily Sun* reported that he had been arrested in Philadelphia while testing his latest invention: a ‘war automobile’. Before police could stop him he had caused several runaways, almost killed half a dozen pedestrians and barely escaped several collisions with street cars. The next morning Pennington and his two assistants were fined \$7.50 each, which he cheerfully paid, saying that the Russian government had sent agents to see his new invention. The ‘war automobile’ was a skeleton steel frame nine feet long with seats for five soldiers, an engineer, and a ‘speed regulator’. There were places for two machine guns at each end, and the entire upper front could

be covered with armour plate. Pennington claimed it would do 30mph over a ploughed field, 75mph on smooth roads and 130mph on rails. Here's more from his New York Times obit: "It was in Cleveland, on another visit, that his second wife—a divorced woman, on whose account his first wife had divorced him—died. He went to a lithographer he had swindled out of \$5,000 who had promised to shoot him on sight and persuaded him to put his wife's coffin in the latter's family vault temporarily. Then he ordered an expensive coffin for her and she was buried. Within a few hours he had married another woman. The undertaker got nothing but the silver plates from the coffin, which he went into the vault and ripped off...On another occasion he went into the office of another man who had also threatened violence after being swindled, and got this man to give him \$50,000, for which he never got anything but another chance to breathe vengeance. After his wife's death in Cleveland he went to Pittsburgh with two women known as Katherine Sherman and Mattie Lamar, the latter passing as his wife. They were arrested later in St Louis for defrauding a woman there out of \$1,000..."

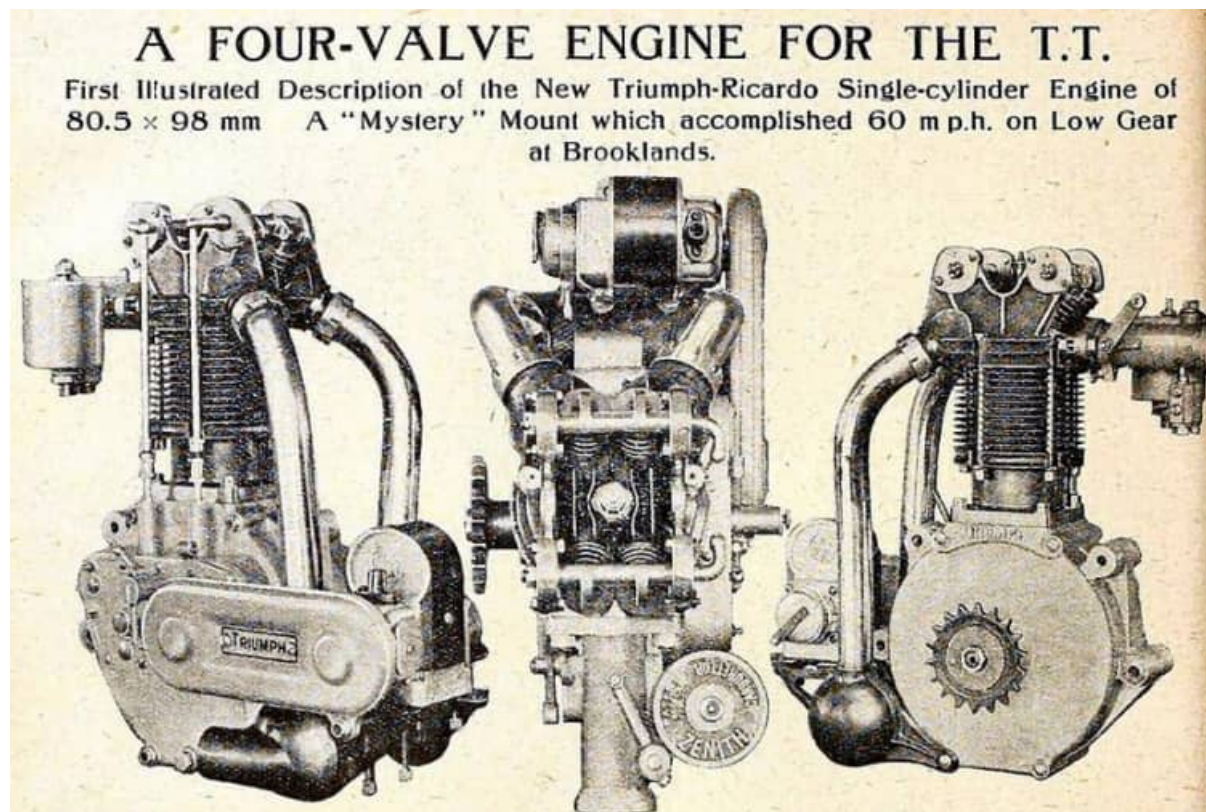
The *Chicago Times* also took an interest in his career: "The Mount Carmel Aeronautic Navigation Co was organized in Chicago in 1890 with \$20 million in capital, on paper. The flying machine was supposed to be all aluminium, 200 feet long, and capable of carrying 40 passengers at 250mph. A scale model of the projected airship was demonstrated at the Chicago Exposition Building to enthusiastic crowds, until an expert revealed in an article in Scientific American that the full-scale version couldn't fly. Pennington left this country about 1894, leaving his wife and several children in Arlington Place, Cincinnati. For a time his wife received long letters from Pennington, telling of the money he was making in London with his cycle motor and other wonderful schemes. Subsequently, the letters came less frequently, until Mrs Pennington for a long while received no word whatever. In desperation she went to London and found Pennington living with a Mrs Marie Alice Durant, a rich Detroit woman, prominent in New York society until she deserted her husband and eloped with Pennington. They were living in the most elegant apartments in London. Pennington soon identified himself with some of the big automobile companies. He sold some of his inventions and squandered several fortunes. In 1898 he returned to this country, creating a furor in eastern social circles. Mrs Pennington had him arrested, and the courts ordered him to contribute to the support of his family in Cincinnati. While Durant was negotiating the terms of an amicable settlement, Pennington slipped out of the country and returned to England. In 1900 he married Mrs Durant in Milwaukee..." It all came to an inglorious end. In 1911, still scamming, Pennington was back in Indian's home town, Springfield, Mass, peddling an electric railway plan to the city fathers. He tripped in a puddle, broke his nose, caught a chill and died of pneumonia.

**Promenade Percy:** Slang (UK), circa 1910, for a noisy, antisocial motor cyclist.

**Pulveriser:** Spray carburettor—not slang (qv ‘bubbler’) but a straightforward description, circa 1902: “The small pulverising spray carburetter is amongst the really practical ones of the show...insures complete pulverisation”

**Radiators/radiating gills:** Cooling fins (pre-WW1).

**Sir Harry Ricardo** (26 January 1885-18 May 1974). One of the great engineers. In 1903, while still earning an engineering degree at Cambridge he published designs for steam and two-stroke motor cycle engines (a small number of his two-strokes powered Lloyd and Plaister motor cycles). In 1904 he won a University Automobile Club fuel consumption competition with a bike that did 160mpg. In 1908 he helped design a Vauxhall car engine for the RAC 2,000-mile trial. In 1909 Ricardo designed a two-stroke 3.3-litre engine for his cousin Ralph Ricardo’s Two Stroke Engine Company at Shoreham-by-Sea. During the Great War Ricardo set up ‘Engine Patents’ and produced a series of engines for tanks and generators. By the end of the war Ricardo had been snapped up by the Department of Military Aeronautics (which became the Royal Aircraft Establishment)—his design for a variable-compression test engine led to the development of the octane rating system and the improved consumption as a result of higher-octane fuel allowed Alcock and Brown to fly the Atlantic in their Vickers Vimy bomber. His work on pistons and combustion chambers was widely appreciated; in 1921 his cylinder head upgraded the already excellent Triumph ‘Trusty’, so beloved by WW1 DRs, to the race winning Ricardo Triumph. In 1922 (with TT Riccy rider Frank Halford) he designed the 945cc in-line four motor cycle for Vauxhall which, alas, remains one of the great ‘might-have-beens’. Ricardo’s later career centred on car, lorry, bus and aircraft engines—highlights included boosting the power of the Rolls-Royce Merlin engine in the Mosquito and designing the combustion chambers and fuel control system of Sir Frank Whittle’s jet engine. He was a member of the WW2 War Cabinet engineering advisory committee, a Fellow of the Royal Society and President of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers. Ricardo Consulting Engineers is still a world-class company. What a geezer!



*The Motor Cycle was certainly impressed by the Triumph-Ricardo.*

**Francois Isaac de Rivaz:** In 1806, the year after Admiral Lord Nelson did his stuff off Cape Trafalgar, de Rivaz designed an internal combustion engine. What's more he built it, made it work and installed it on a cart. It only did 2mph and only covered a few yards but nonetheless this was an automobile, of sorts, and it ran a clear 64 years before Siegfried Marcus made his self-propelled cart and 79 years before Daimler built his first prototype. De Rivaz was born in Paris and earned his crust as a soldier, politician, entrepreneur and inventor. Towards the end of the 18th century he experimented with steam-powered vehicles but after retiring to Switzerland his attention turned to gas engines. First he extracted hydrogen from water and ignited it with a spark using a Volta electric cell. Then he developed an engine fuelled by hydrogen stored in a balloon and fitted it into a cart that was six metres long and weighed almost a ton. It wasn't what you'd call high revving—the driver had to open a foot-operated valve to fill the cylinder with gas, close it and switch on the current to make the electric spark for each revolution. But it worked.

**Alphonse de Rochas:** In 1862 de Rochas, a Frenchman, published a booklet in which he established the four prerequisites for an efficient 'explosion engine': The greatest possible cylinder volume with the least possible cooling surface; the greatest possible rapidity of explosion; the greatest possible expansion; the greatest possible pressure at the beginning of this expansion. The way to achieve this, he concluded, would be with a 'suction' stroke followed by compression, ignition 'at the dead point' and 'expansion during the third stroke'. This amounted to a clear description of the four-stroke internal

combustion cycle famously reinvented by Dr Otto 14 years later. However, Otto put the theory into practice while for de Rochas it remained an intellectual exercise.

**Sausages:** Slang (UK) circa 1920 for padded leather tubes on the side of a cap designed to shelter the rider's ears from draughts without impeding hearing.

**Sidecar combination:** First used circa 1915, before which "sidecar" was commonly used to refer to the entire vehicle. Commonly abbreviated to "combo" or "outfit" ("outfit" was in use by 1916), from "sidecar outfit".

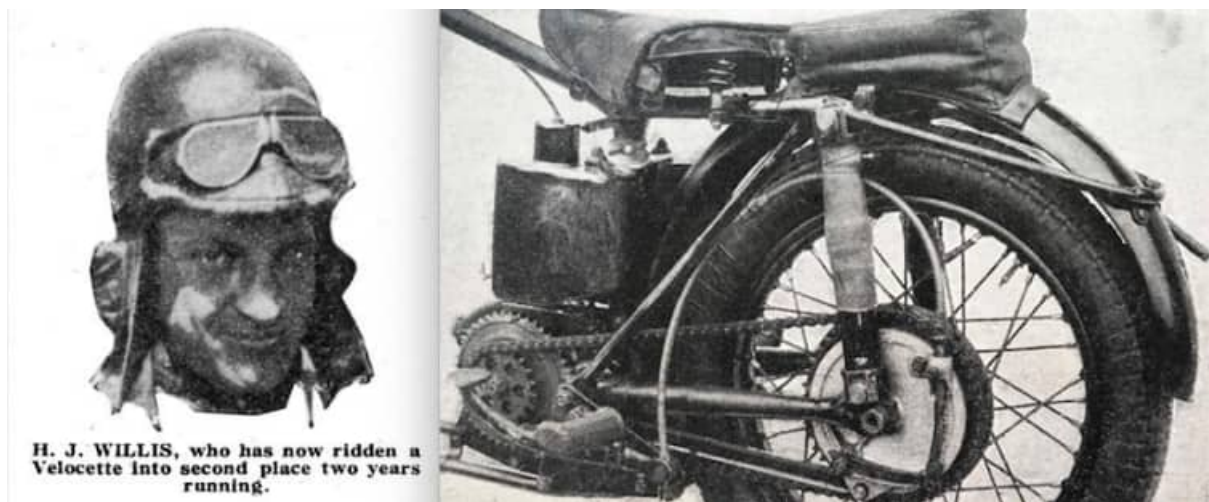
**Single:** In modern parlance, a single-cylinder motorcycle (qv one-lunger) but in pioneer times a bike with no forecar, sidecar or trailer—which we would now describe as a solo.

**Starcher:** Slang (UK) circa 1917 for Sturmey-Archer gear,

**Stepney:** Slang (UK) circa 1930s, for a cheap bike, described in the Blue 'Un as "a machine to take the place of your usual mount when there is decoding to be done". Nowadays we'd refer to a 'winter hack', 'hack' being derived from 'Hackney carriage'; no doubt cheap vehicles for hire were also referred to a 'Stepney carriages'. Either label is a slur on the East End of London as a down-market area, but as an emigre South Londoner I don't really care.

**Willis, Harold (1899-1939):** Runner-up in the Junior TT (twice), inventor of the positive-stop gearchange—and the dual seat. Following training as a naval cadet at the Royal Naval College, Osborne and at the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, Harold went on active service aboard the armoured cruiser HMS Hogue. Within a month Hogue was one of three cruisers torpedoed by a German submarine—1,459 British sailors died; Harold, aged 15, was one of the 837 survivors. A month later he joined the battleship HMS Colossus and took part in the Battle of Jutland in 1916 but was discharged on medical grounds in 1917, still only 18 years old. He joined a marine engineering firm as an apprentice and raced at Brooklands and the Island, finishing fifth and ninth in the 1924 and 1925 Junior TTs on a Montgomery. The following year Alec Bennett won the Junior on a cammy Velo. To satisfy the ensuing surge in demand Velocette moved into what would become the world famous Hall Green works. To fund this move they sold shares, many of which were bought by





Not your typical company director: Harold Willis was a rare mixture of engineer, designer and rider. (Right) The first Dowty Oleomatic shocks on the swinging-arm that was grafted onto a 1936 Velo GP frame.

Harold's father. As part of the deal Willis Jnr took a seat on the Velocette board as technical director and development engineer. In 1927 he rode Velos to victory in the Brooklands Hutchinson Hundred and to second place in the Junior TT (you'll find reports in the timeline). He was also runner up in the 1928 Junior—and was the first rider to cover 100 miles in an hour on a 350 to win a Brooklands Gold Star. In 1929 he patented the positive-stop foot change which debuted in the 1928 Junior, made hand changers obsolete overnight and has been ubiquitous ever since. Harold's second innovation was inspired by Sunbeam ace Charlie Dodson, who won the 1928 and 1929 Senior TTs. Charlie's race winning technique involved sitting back on a rear mudguard pad to help streamlining. As a fellow racer Harold recognised the sense in this set-up but decided it could be improved by making a one-piece combined saddle and pad. Because of the way it looked, he christened the extended seat 'the Loch Ness Monster' and subsequently allowed Feridax to put the dual seat into production. In 1936 Velocette built three racers with swinging-arm rear suspension and, for the first time, he rear springs featured shock absorbers. Yet again Harold was the driving force behind a major innovation. He flew a de Havilland Moth (which he nicknamed 'Clattering Kate') and happened to see an aircraft fitted with Dowty springless oleo-pneumatic units—progenitors of modern air-shocks. Harold visited the Dowty company which agreed to produce a batch of Oleo shocks for Velocette. They featured on the MkVIII proddie racer from 1937-1950. This set-up contributed to Velocette's success in clubman's races and in the Manx Grand Prix but the company didn't win another TT until 1938 when Stanley Woods, who had racked up four TT wins with Norton and two with Moto Guzzi, won the Junior on a cammy Velo and nearly made it a double, finishing second in the Senior. Stanley won the Junior on a Velo again 1939 but Harold was not there to see it. Early in 1939 he was busy on a new twin cylinder engine, which he



Harold Willis designed the MkVIII KTT's positive-stop gearchange and swinging-arm frame that helped Stanley Woods ride it to two successive Junior TT wins. (Right) Harold also designed and named the Roarer—Stanley Woods is pictured with the beast on the Island in 1939 but teething troubles (melting plugs) sidelined it that year and the FIM post-war blower ban finished it off.

named 'The Roarer' because of the noise from its short rearward facing exhaust ports. So raise a glass to the memory of Harold Willis who died too young but left us with the foot gearchange, dual seat and modern swinging-arm suspension that have typified motor cycles until the present day. Green 'Un editor (and Lightweight TT winner) Graham Walker recalled: 'In the 1920 Colmore Cup Trial it was necessary to cover the long circuit non-stop. I noticed that one of the competitors was riding solo on a huge Reading Standard, a big, cumbersome twin totally unsuited to the conditions. When I spoke to him afterwards I was told he chose it deliberately because he liked to find out where machines were wrong! The rider was Harold Willis, and the remark summed up his whole outlook on life...He had a language of his own which later became famous...'Whiffing Clara' (the supercharged single-cylinder Velocette) and the 'Flying Bedstead', the early spring-frame model, were experiments in which he delighted, and it was no surprise to us when he retired into the Hall Green 'din-house' (another Willisicism) there to produce, in collaboration with Mr Percy Goodman, Charlie Udell, Phil Irving, and other members of the Velocity Brigade, those masterpieces ridden to victory in the Island and all over the Continent by Stanley Woods, Ted Mellors and Co, his sole relaxation being the piloting of his 'plane, 'Clattering Kate' which made possible brief flights to his beloved Welsh coast...The industry has suffered a great loss in Harold's untimely death, for engineers possessed of such intense enthusiasm and skill are all too rare at this vital period in British motorcycling progress."

**PS** After the war the FIM banned blowers, effectively killing off the Roarer (and the fabulous AJS V4). But having become involved in motor cycle suspension, Dowty used the same principles to produce 'Oleomatic' front forks; from the late '40s these were fitted by Velocette, Scott and Panther. Later designs of 'air forks' became the standard

for performance motorcycles from the 1970s onwards. Motor cyclists have a lot for which to thank Harold Willis.



In the late 1930s everyone and his dog was working on vertical twins. Phil Irving (yes, that Phil Irving) was briefed to come up with a roadster based on the Roarer. In 1939 he came up with the Model O, an elegant 586cc ohv parallel twin with shaft drive that did 95mph. The war stopped its development—one more what-if. But as well as Phil Irving's engine it also features all three of Harold Willis's contributions to modern motor cycles: a swing-arm frame, dual seat and foot gearchange. Here's a whimsy: a post-war Model O with Dowty Oleomatic forks—or a 750cc version with a front disc brake to take Velocette into the 1970s and beyond...

**Willoughby, Vic (1914-2000):** Technical editor of *The Motor Cycle* and *Motor Cycle Weekly*, motor cycle racer and a genuine Number 8 Hat (qv). This article appeared in *Australian Motorcycle News*; my thanks to *AMCN* for permission to reproduce it: "Scan a baby-boomer bike nut's book shelf and you'll likely see the name Vic Willoughby. His works included *Classic Motorcycles*, *The Racing Motorcycle*, *Winning Racing Engines*, *Exotic Motorcycles—A Tester's Privilege* [Vic once told me he wanted to call it simply *My Privilege* but the idiot publishers wouldn't have it—Ed], *Classic Motorcycle Engines—A New Perspective* and *Motorcycle Chassis Design—Theory and Practice*. Willoughby was technical editor of leading weekly magazine *The Motor Cycle* from the 1950s through to his retirement at the end of the 1970s. And His articles were often accompanied by wonderful diagrams drawn by fellow staffer Laurie Watts. One of his plum jobs was testing Isle of Man TT-winning bikes on sections of the Mountain Course. With the long IoM summer daylight, this often occurred the same day as the race. Moto Guzzi's Giulio Carcano was one of Willoughby's engineering heroes. Walter Kaaden of MZ two-stroke fame was another. Willoughby was a race reporter as well and huge fan of Bob McIntyre, the first rider to lap the IoM at 100mph. He told this scribe Bob Mac's attitude to the TT was 'I didn't come here to fuck around' and that John

Surtees' father Jack would try to tell journos how to write their stories. He attended the 1980 Easter Bathurst meeting, where he told the crowd at the post-race function that motorcycle racing wouldn't have produced the characters it did unless it was dangerous. (Two riders had died at the during the meeting, Ian Dick and Rob Moorhouse.) Victor Harold Willoughby was born in London in 1914 and initially worked as an office manager. He said it hurt him that as a 'strapping lad, playing association football, I had to learn to type...' He began racing before World War 2, riding a Velocette KTT 350 at Brooklands, where he lapped at 100mph. It was a trek just to reach the circuit. The diminutive Willoughby would push his machine to the nearest station, take a couple of trains to



A youthful Vic with his Triumph when riding from race to race on the Continental Circus.

Weybridge in Surrey, and then hoof it again to the venue. One of Vic's favourite stories was of a man he met one day at Brooklands. 'This guy was fascinated as I worked on the KTT,' Willoughby said. 'He was much older than me, but he looked envious of my enjoyment. He'd had money in his younger days, but he had wasted it on wine, women and song. He said to me: "Do it now; because you'll never be able to turn the clock back to do something you really wanted to do."' In 1948, Willoughby joined the famed Continental Circus, after a fellow racer told him European organisers paid starting money. He raced in Europe for three seasons. Vic marvelled at the enthusiasm shown by the organisers of the more distant races, recounting how he lived on French bread and tea for days while he and Bill Petch drove a ex-Canadian Army van from Belgium down through France to Barcelona, for the annual race at Montjuic Parc in 1949. 'We'd buy a bread stick in the morning and start eating from opposite ends as we drove! When we reached Barcelona at 2.30am, someone from the organising club was there to meet us and put us up in a four-star hotel,' he said. Willoughby talked of the camaraderie of



riders, including Australia's Harry Hinton Snr, loaning bikes to their mates to ensure they could collect their starting money and the great times in general. 'If you won you had a slap-up meal; if you had a bad run and went broke you hitch-hiked home.' Vic explained how at the end of the season, bike clubs from across England would send representatives to the channel ports to ask returning riders to talk about the European scene at their meetings. That grounding led to Willoughby writing stories for *The Motor Cycle* using the pseudonym Lone Wolf, eventually earning a staff job under famed editor Harry Louis – whose key piece of advice to his new hiring was 'marshal your thoughts'. Willoughby died at his home on the northern fringe of London on 16 November, 2000."—

**Don Cox, AMCN** Here's Vic's TT record: 1948, Junior, Velocette, DNF; 1948, Senior, Triumph, DNF; 1949, Junior, Velocette, DNF; 1950, Junior, Velocette, DNF; 1950, Senior, Norton, 25th at 80.62mph; 1952, Junior, Velocette, DNF; 1952, Senior, Norton, 11th at 86.16mph; 1953, Junior, Norton, 12th at 83.62mph; 1953, Senior, Norton, DNF. I was privileged to work with Vic. As a retired motor cycle hack I have three heroes who were the very best in the business; Ixion, of course, Bob Currie (about whom I plan write some memories for this gallimaufry) and Vic Willoughby. So here are some assorted anecdotes: At a TT in the early eighties I shared a room with Vic. After the first night he said, "Dave, nothing personal but we have a busy week ahead of us. Your snoring kept me awake, you'd best sleep in the bath." Which I did. Vic's retirement do was attended by our divisional MD and his lackeys. Vic was understandably furious that changes to the company pension scheme had left him with a much smaller income than he'd been promised and concluded his speech (as best as I can recall after half a lifetime): "When I joined *The Motor Cycle* under Lord Illiffe, circulation was quarter of a million and rising. Now, under Reed Business Publishing, it's 70,000 and falling. This lot couldn't run a piss-up in a brewery and I'm glad to be leaving." I say with some pride that I was the first to applaud; the MD shook Vic's hand and told him: "If I'd known you were going to make that speech I'd have worn my cricket box." Fair comment, but the director and his minions immediately left the party. Phil Irving was there (yes, Vic was that well connected) and a little later I was looking at him and Vic chatting and pondering the encyclopaedic knowledge of motor cycling that they shared when Vic caught my eye and waved me over. I was excited as a schoolgirl that Vic thought me worthy to be introduced to the great Irving; Vic just said, "Phil, this is Dave Richmond, he'll show you where the toilet is." Genuinely one of my favourite memories. That evening I invited Vic to spend a night at my place. He accepted and my missus Allie was a bit worried about entertaining a pensioner. Vic turned up in his white Porsche, immaculate in tweed jacket, white rollneck, cavalry twill trousers and highly polished brogues with a huge bunch of flowers and chocolates for his hostess; she's never forgotten what a charmer he was. Here are a couple of VHW stories which he shared after dinner, they're as accurate as I can manage after nearly 40 years: He was part of the Vincent





Monthléry, May 1952, if you haven't spotted Vic he's third from the right. And this reminds me that Vic told me of another record breaking escapade. It seems fully enclosed German 175 streamliner (I can't recall the marque) was lapping a circuit for 24 hours on a record breaking run. Vic was on hand to report the attempt and, being Vic, was allowed to ride it. There were holes in the bottom of the fairing for the rider's legs of course but the factory pilot was over 6ft and Vic wasn't so his feet didn't reach the ground. He told me the Jerries installed him in the cockpit, pushed him off for an hour's riding on the deserted track and went for lunch. He admitted that was pleased to see them come back.

expedition in May 1952 that set a number of world records and would have set more had an engine not blown. The controversy over the causes rumbled on for many years. During his visit Vic told me that he was riding at the time and Phil Vincent told him off for going flat out rather than just fast enough to break existing records as the uncaged roller big ends were known to be vulnerable. Vic told me he'd advised Vincent to look at Leonardo da Vinci's drawing of a caged roller bearing. After which, he claimed, Vincent wouldn't talk to him for two years. Vic spent holidays staying with the great Giulio Carcano, designer of the Guzzi V8. During one of these holidays (I seem to recall Vic mentioned a "palazzo on Lake Como") he put his back out but needed to get back to work as Carcano's family loaded Vic into his Porsche, added a bottle or two of Chianti and a hamper of good Italian scran and waved him off on a non-stop run to Calais. Vic drove that Porsche like the TT rider he was. One press-day he gave MCW production editor Bill Tull a lift to our typesetters at Colchester. Bill (no scaredy-cat—his stable included a V8 Rover and a Triton) returned by train, later regaling the office with tales of broadsiding roundabouts on the A12. Here's an addition to Don Cox's story about the Continental Circus: Vic didn't always push his MkIIIX to the station. At least once he found a cabbie who read the Blue 'Un; the Velo was squeezed across the back on the

cab with the doors lashed in place. Here are two of Vic's memories that still make me smile. He enrolled in the RAF which entailed a maths test. Vic scored 99/100 and asked the RAF corporal in charge of the exam where he'd gone wrong. He was told he'd made an error in a question involving pi. Vic checked and assured the corporal that his answer was correct, pi being, approximately, 3.1412. Well in the RAF," the corporal snapped, "it's 22/7. Now fuck off!" And when Vic shared that story he was still cross. A final remark: I knew Vic as an intense, brilliant, talented journalist devoted entirely to his role as the best technical journalist in the history of motor cycling who didn't suffer fools lightly (he seemed to make an exception in my case, presumably because he realised I meant well and shared his obsession). But I had a glimpse of another side to Vic when he visited us. I'd invited some chums round after dinner to meet the great man and looked forward to listening to him discourse on motor cycling, which he did (my chum Phil, who was there, recalled recently that Vic was en route to Munich to consult with BMW about the forthcoming K-Series). But before and during dinner he declined to talk bikes, instead chatting to my Allie who recalls that whenever our son Harry (now a strapping 40-year-old, then about two) toddled over saying. "Vic..." Vic broke off, clearly delighted to engage with our nipper. I learned later that Vic was a happily married man who lost his beloved Joan far too soon. But for that loss he would have been a great family man. I wish I'd known him better.

*PS Having just uploaded this entry on Vic Willoughby, I noticed that he falls between Harold Willis and Stanley Woods. He'd have liked that. And I've just remembered Vic told me he was once waiting for plan at (I think) Belfast Airport with Stanley Woods, then in his eighties, who had recently had new hips fitted. Vic smiled at the memory of Stanley doing deep knee bends "to run in his hips". And what wouldn't I give to have listened in on that conversation—Ed.*



**Woods, Stanley (1904-1993):** Jim Reynolds produced this excellent obit for *The Independent*: “Stanley Woods, motorcyclist: born November 1904; died Castlewellan, Co Down 28 July 1993. The final link with grand prix motorcycle racing of the 1930s has been severed with the death of Stanley Woods. The last survivor of a galaxy of British and Irish stars who dominated international racing before the Second World War, Woods was also the most successful Isle of Man TT rider of the era with 10 wins, a record he held for over 25 years until the late Mike Hailwood beat it. When he did so, Woods was waiting at the finish to congratulate him. The son of a toffee salesman who Stanley drove around in the sidecar of a 1,000cc Harley Davidson, Stanley borrowed this machine to make his racing debut in 1921. He removed the sidecar and rode in a public roads event until a crash removed him from the race. He replaced the broken handlebar with a branch cut from a roadside hedge and rode home. Woods’ TT career began in 1922, when his Cotton caught fire during a refuelling stop. He dowsed the fire, brushed aside the officials who were trying to persuade him to stop, and rode off to finish the race in fifth place; he was 18 years old. In 1923 he was back with a new Cotton and rewarded the Gloucester-based company with their first TT win. He graduated to the Norton team in 1926 and won the 500cc Senior TT for them. It was the beginning of a love-hate relationship with the company. In 1929 Woods won the Spanish Grand Prix and two years later joined with the Lancastrian Tim Hunt to dominate European grands prix after Hunt had won two TT races in a week, the first man to do so. From 1932 it was Woods’ turn to lead the way, winning 350cc and 500cc TT races in both 1932 and 1933, then travelling on into Europe to dominate the grands prix. By 1934 his independent

character and the prospect of better money took him to Sweden, to sign for the Husqvarna factory, where the first test of his new mount was on a frozen lake. It proved less able on the tarmac and in 1935 Woods changed camps to give the



Italian Moto Guzzi factory their first TT victories, with the 250cc and 500cc titles. In the 500 race he broke the record average speed per lap by 4mph to pass Jimmy Guthrie, the new Norton team leader, and snatch victory on the last lap. From 1936 until his retirement from racing in 1939, Woods rode mainly for the Velocette factory, where he enjoyed a good personal relationship with the shop floor and the board of directors. His retainer was modest (some said as little as pounds 200 – Woods kept the figures to himself) but bonuses were generous; he was earning his living on results. His fearless riding style—he would talk calmly of drifting corners at 100mph on the loose surfaces of the time—was combined with mechanical sympathy to win two more TTs for Velocette in 1938 and 1939 and bring Woods’ own score to 10. At the same time he rode for the German DKW factory on a supercharged two-stroke 250, but the engines were fragile and success was limited. His faithful Velocettes and Guzzis served him better and he enjoyed good relations with both companies long after his retirement from active competition. In recent years, with burgeoning interest in the classic motorcycle scene, Woods was in demand for interviews. His natural modesty was reflected in the way he caught a ferry from Ulster to in 1979 to join the queue for the first Classic Bike Show in Manchester. Three years later he was guest of honour at the same event, clearly overwhelmed to be feted as a star by enthusiasts many years his junior. His ability built him into a legend, but his modesty prevented him recognising it.” Woods was a class act off the track too. Here’s a snippet from 1969 in this very timeline: “This year’s Shamrock Rally was a great success, I gather from Gerry Kennedy,” Nitor reported. “Entries were up to 300 (200 of them from across the Irish Sea, by the way); Ireland’s greatest road-racer Stanley Woods added lustre to the gathering, pleasing his hosts mightily by declaring that if he were a younger motor cyclist again it’s rallying he’d be going in for, not racing.”



The Blue 'Un's matchless technical editor Vic Willoughby was certainly an admirer. He recalled that he was with Woods waiting to catch a plane at Belfast Airport soon after Woods had been fitted with a new hip. Your typical octogenarian might have requested a wheelchair; Woods did a series of deep knee bends to run in his new hip. I was privileged to see the great man ride once, in the early 1980s I was on The Island earning my daily bread with *Motor Cycle Weekly* and by wonderful chance was on the spot during the 'classic racer' parade when Woods decided he's had enough of following the lead car, dropped a gear on his KTT Velo and took off like a scalded cat. There are some wonderful clips of Woods in action and being interviewed on youtube; well worth a google.



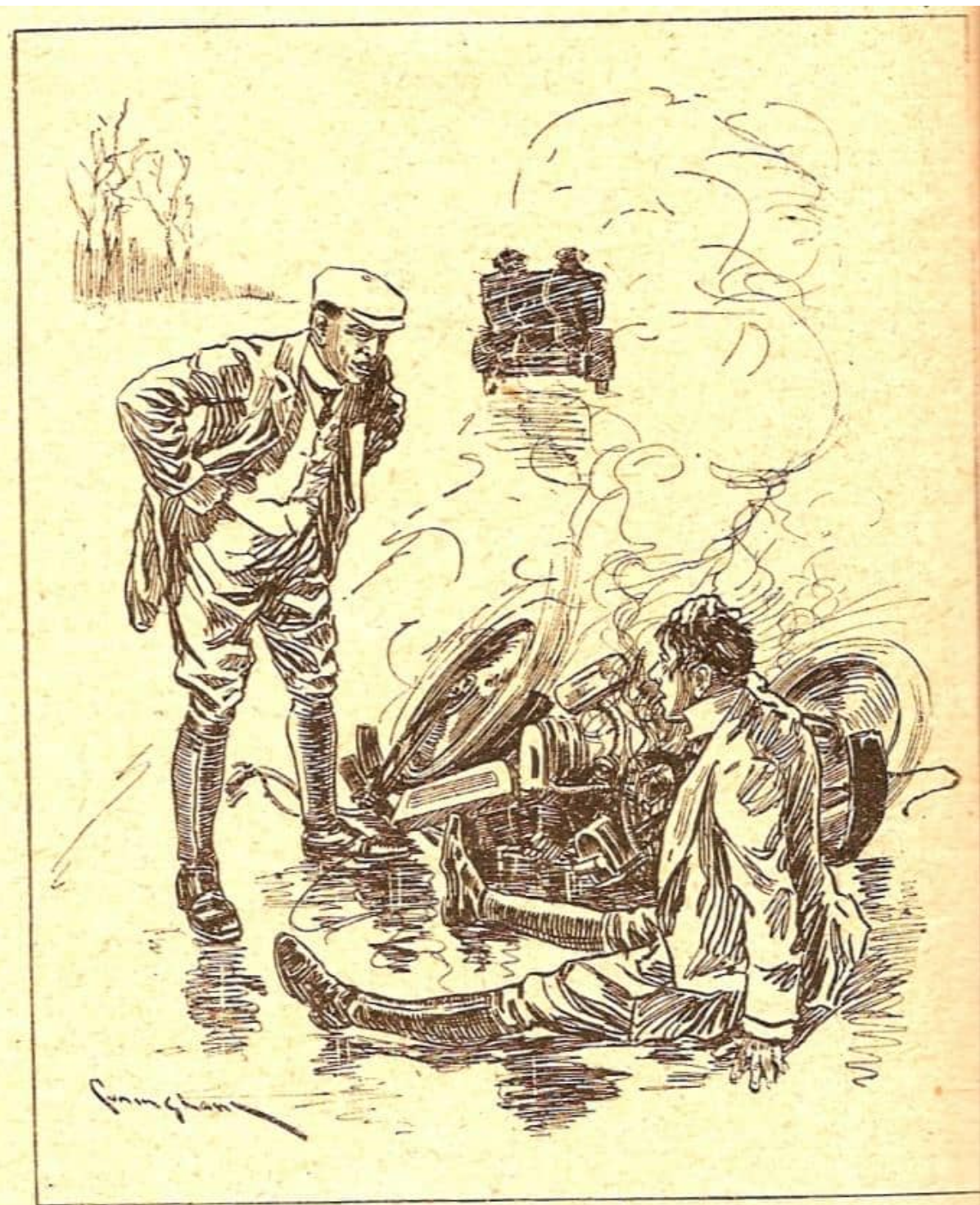


**Wright, WL:** In 1833 WL Wright patented a gas engine powered by “the explosion of a mixture of inflammable gas and air” acting directly on the piston, which transmitted power via a conrod to a crankshaft, just like a modern engine. The single-cylinder engine was double-acting, with the piston receiving two impulses for every revolution of the crankshaft. Judging by the patent drawing Wright’s engine looked like a high-pressure steam engine with gas and air pumped into each end of the cylinder at a few psi above atmospheric pressure. Ignition, controlled by an external flame and a touch hole, caused alternate explosions at either end of the cylinder. Induction was regulated by a centrifugal governor.

**365:** Slang (US), circa 1910, for year.

## Artwork/Humour

*Just as it says on the packet, some of the cartoons that made the pioneers chuckle, or maybe wince. Also unearthed are some illustrations that have more to do with whimsy than humour and others that are simply lovely illustrations. In any case, like the poems, they offer an insight into those early days on the road. You'll also find cigarette cards, adverts, posters, badges and postcards (including, thanks to my chum Francois, some French cards that are tres joli). Enjoy.*



Sympathizer : "Of course you'll bring an action against them for damages?"

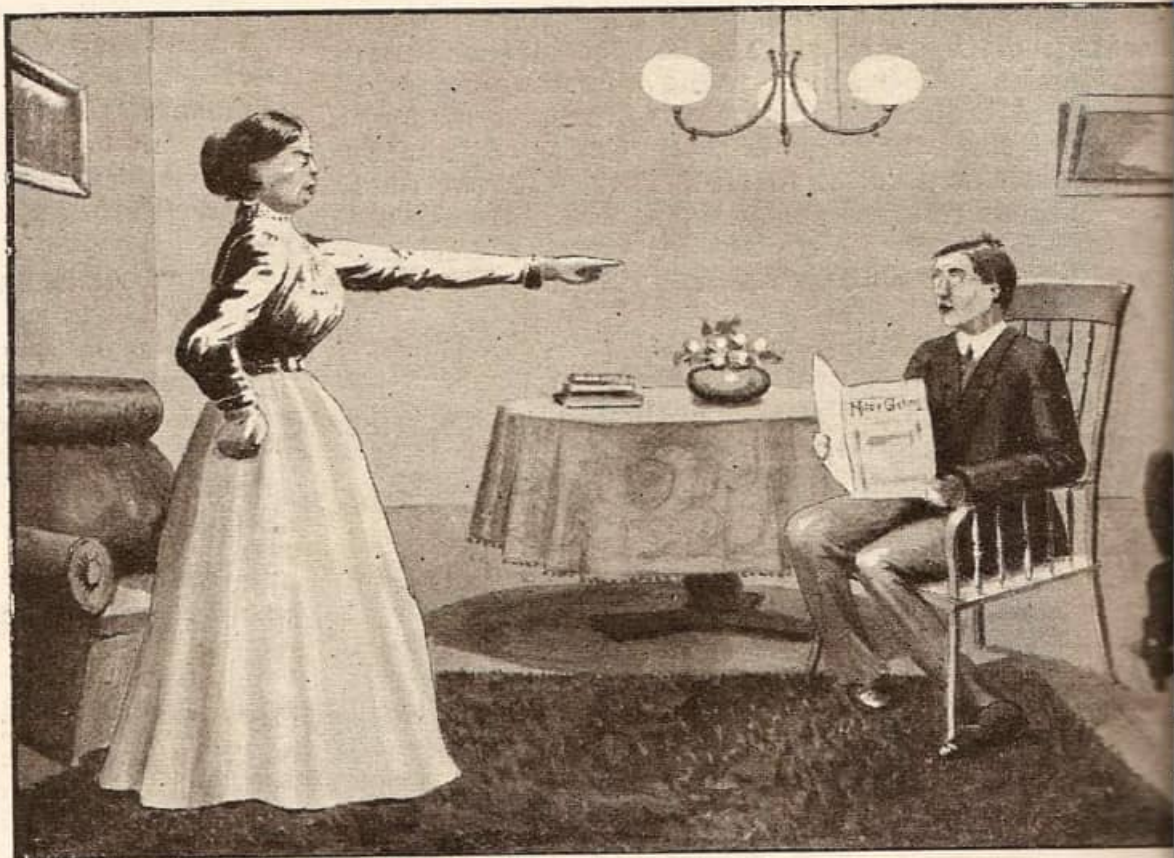
Motorcyclist : "It's not damages I want, it's repairs."



HOW TO DEAL WITH THE POLICE.

II.—The speed method.





Several motorcycling terms illustrated: "If tyred hub spoke, could he  
silencer torque?"





### A FORLORN HOPE.

Motorcyclist: "Can you tell me if there is a repair shop hereabouts?"  
Sympathetic Local: "No, sir; but if you'll wait a few minutes I'll fetch our Bill. He's rare handy. You should see how he mended our wheelbarrow!"





When riders were on tour they wanted to send postcards home, particularly if the postcards had bikes on.







"HI, MISTER, MIND YER TART DON'T FALL OFF THE TRAY!"  
"WHAT IF SHE DOES? I'LL SOON GET ANOTHER!"



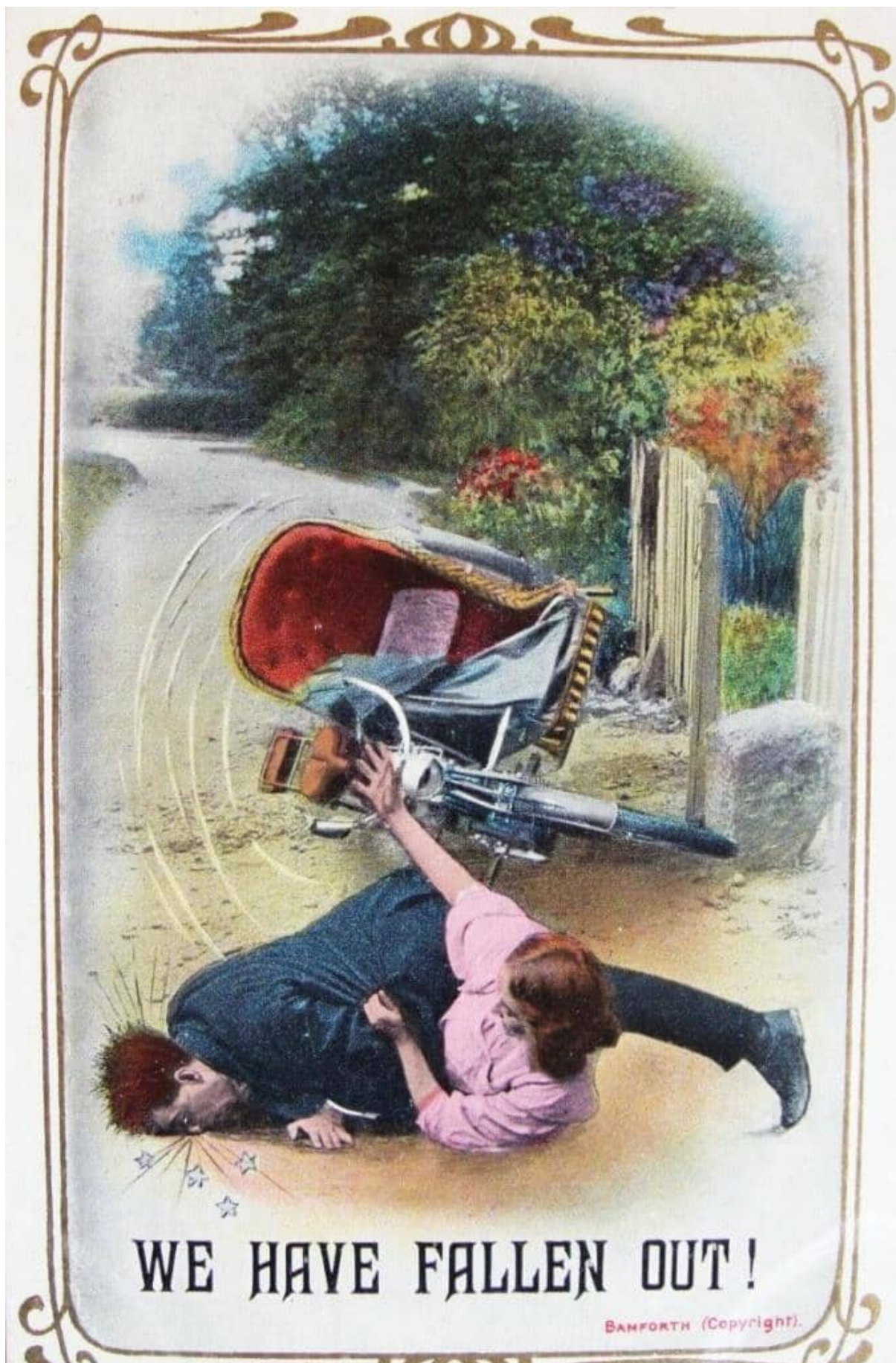
"There's something gone wrong with the engine!"  
"Don't be silly, George - wait till we get off the main road!"



CLICKED WITH A NICE BOY — BUT HE'S AWFULLY  
FAST, SO I'M LEAVING HIM!







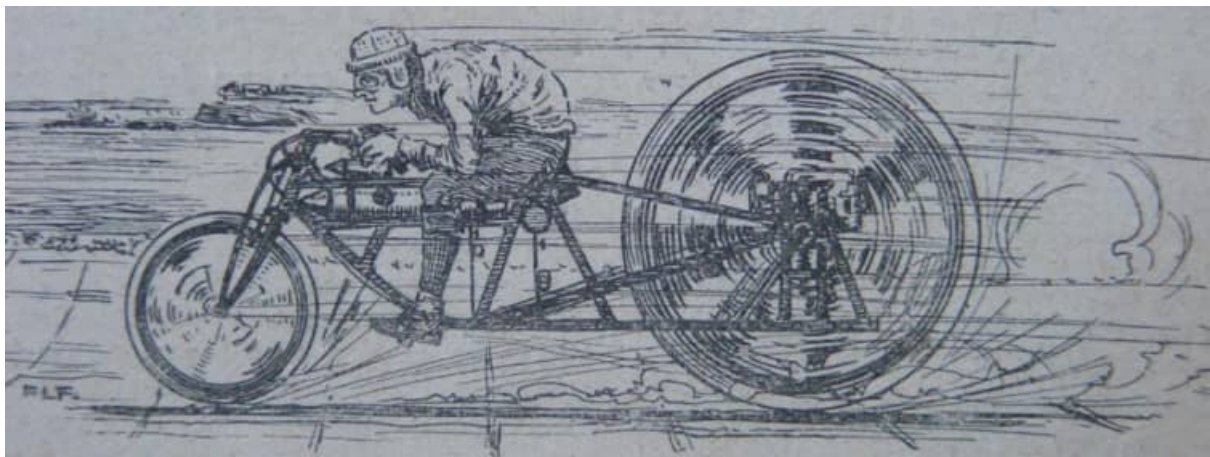
**WE HAVE FALLEN OUT!**

BAMFORTH (Copyright).



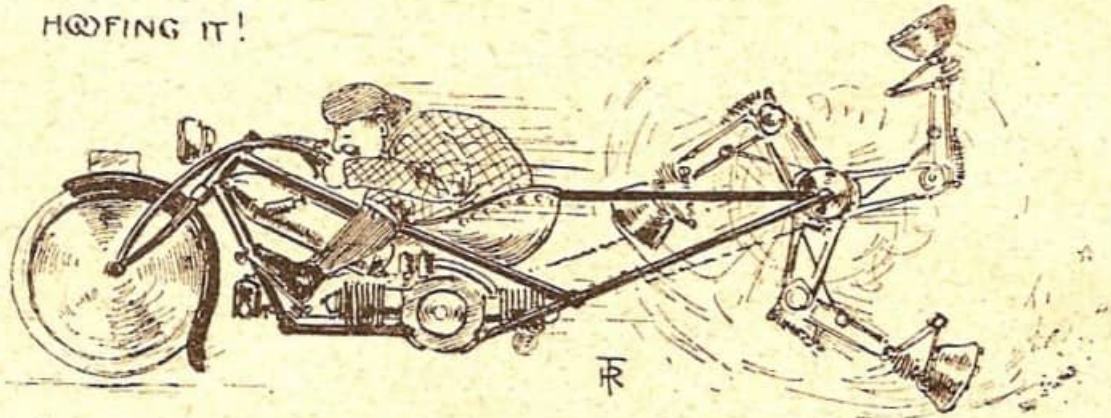


"PLEASE, BRITHER SANDY, IF YE DINNA COME BACK  
ANY MORE, CAN I HAVE YOUR MOTOR BIKE?"

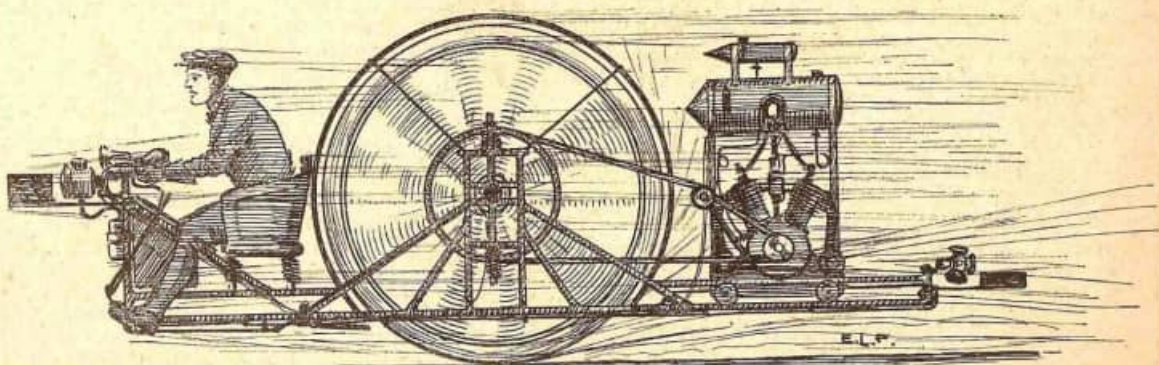


Another whimsical bike, circa 1909. The period caption ran: "What speed could it attain with this seven-cylinder rotary engine?"

HOOFING IT!

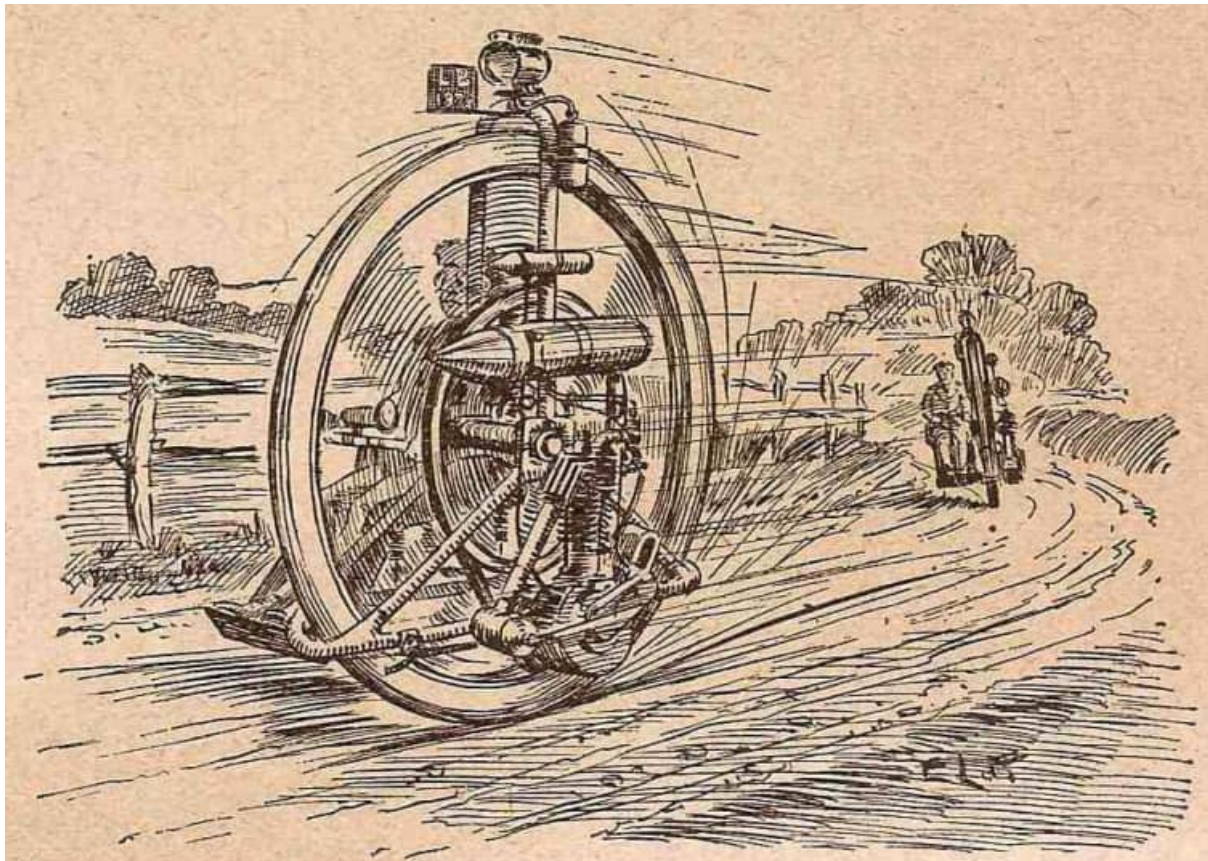


Leave the wheels to roll along, and devise other means for transmission.



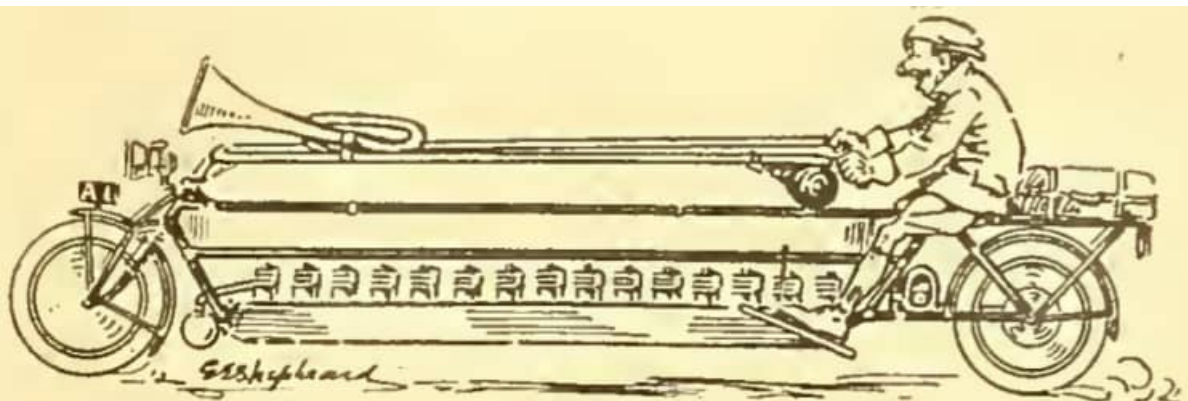
Another "Motor Cycling" type. The 8 h.p. twin-cylinder Uni, with wheel steering and free engine. The power plant slides upon rails at the rear platform by means of a cable actuated from the lever beside the driver. Fore and aft balance is also attained by the same means. All weight is spring-suspended upon the central guides, and an upper rail takes the engine thrust.





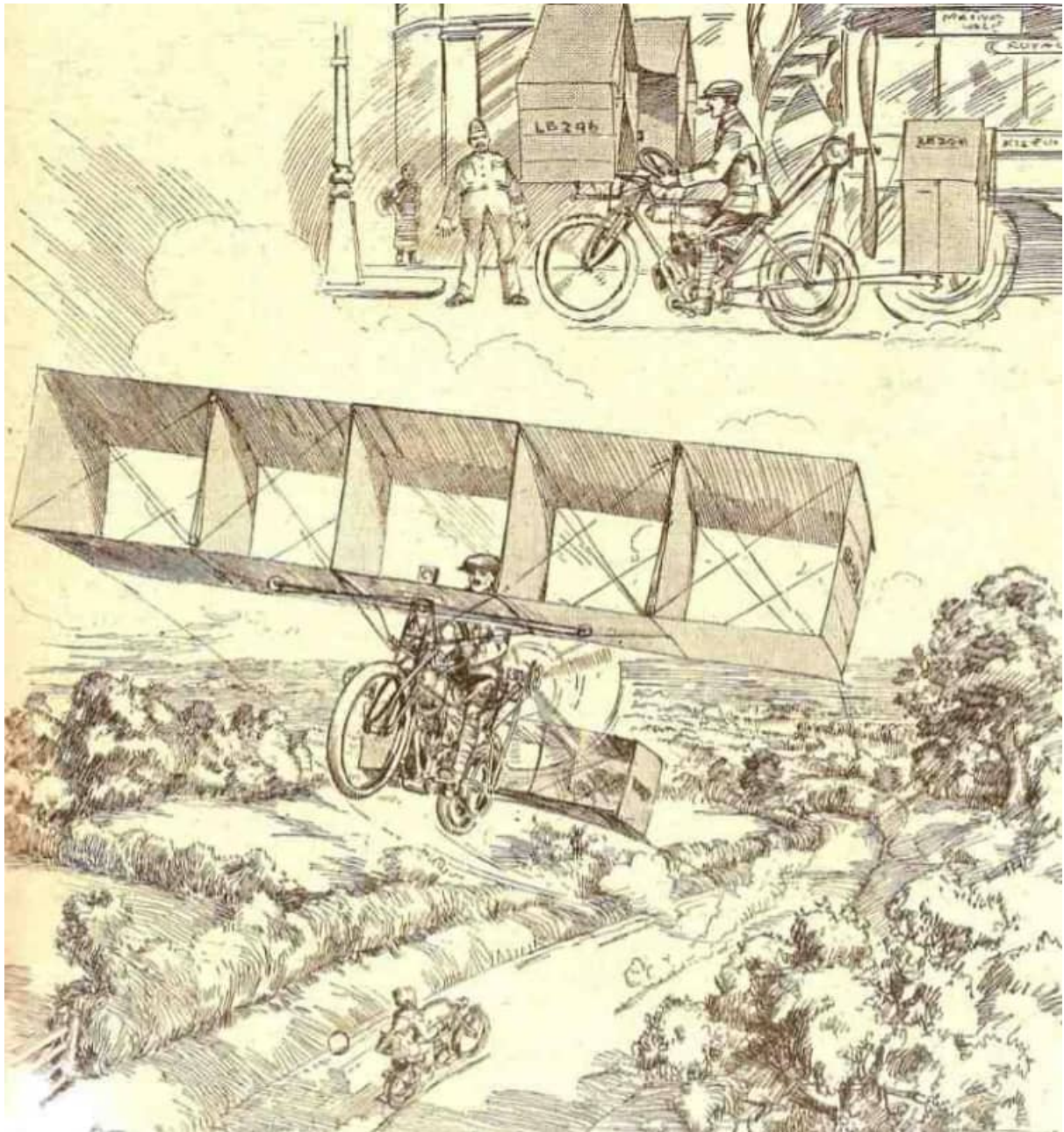
**WILL NOT BE SEEN AT THE SHOW.**

**The 16 h.p. single-cylinder uni-m.-b., with spring suspension, magneto ignition, free engine and wheel-steering. Can the idea be realized?**

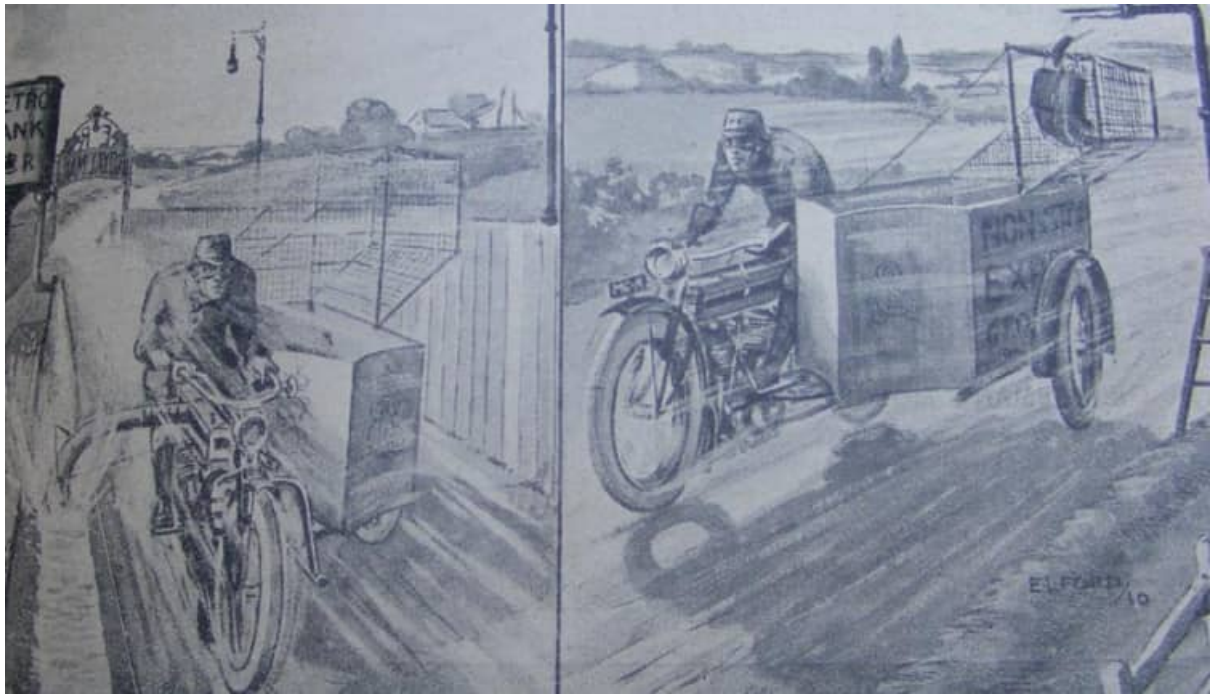


**Constant torque.**





Ride the bike, fly the bike...



It's-a-long-shot-but-it-might-just-work dept: "The Post Office are setting a lead in the commercial use of the motor-bicycle, and motorcycling postal services are proving very efficient. Knowing the great speed capacity of the modern machine, may we not one day see a motor-bicycle non-stop postal service? Our artist's suggestion provides for taking up petrol and post without stopping."

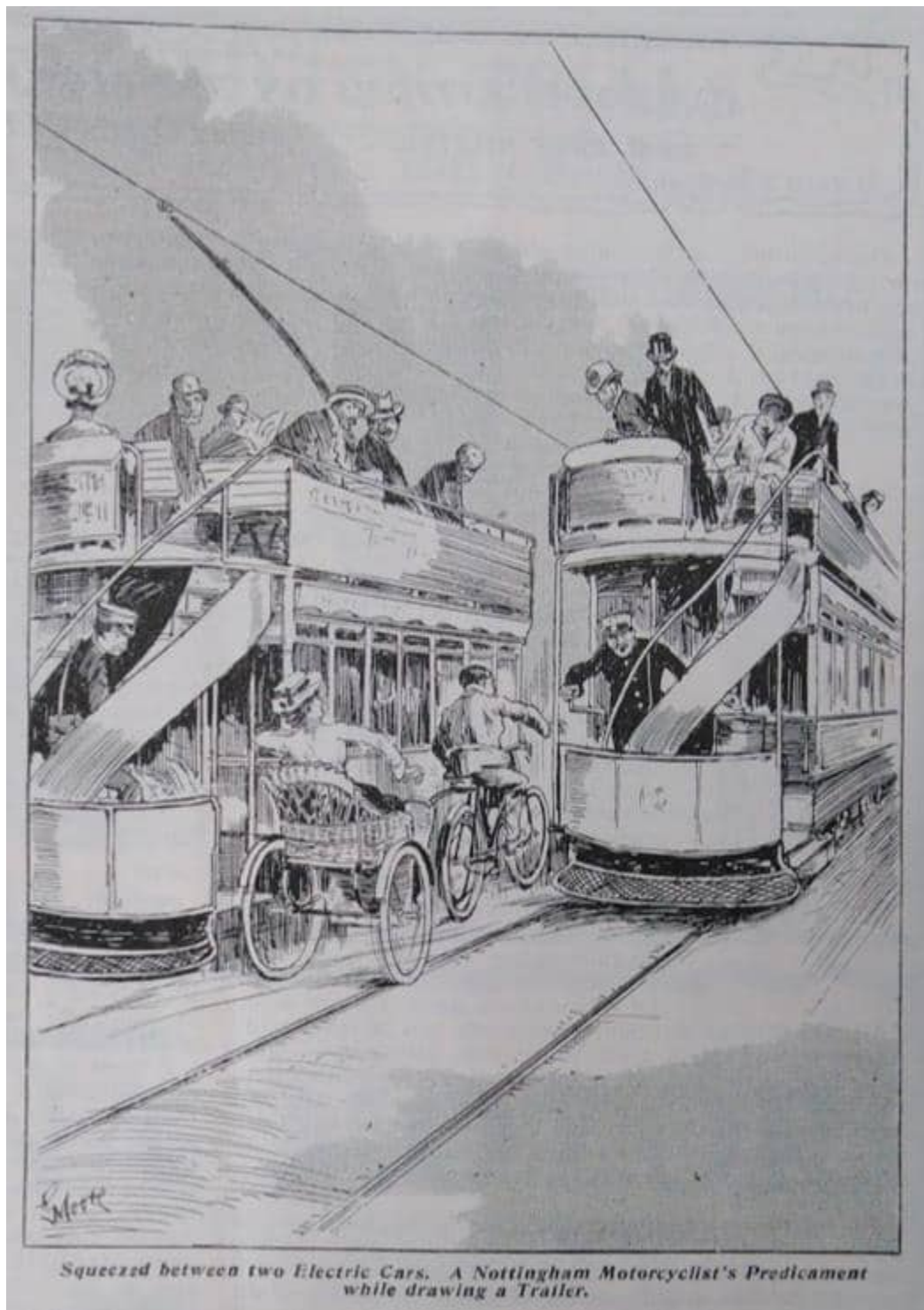




This rub tickler also

dates from 1909: "I hear poor Scorchers ran into a wall and broke his jaw. How's he getting on?"

"Oh! he cannot complain." Go on, laugh.



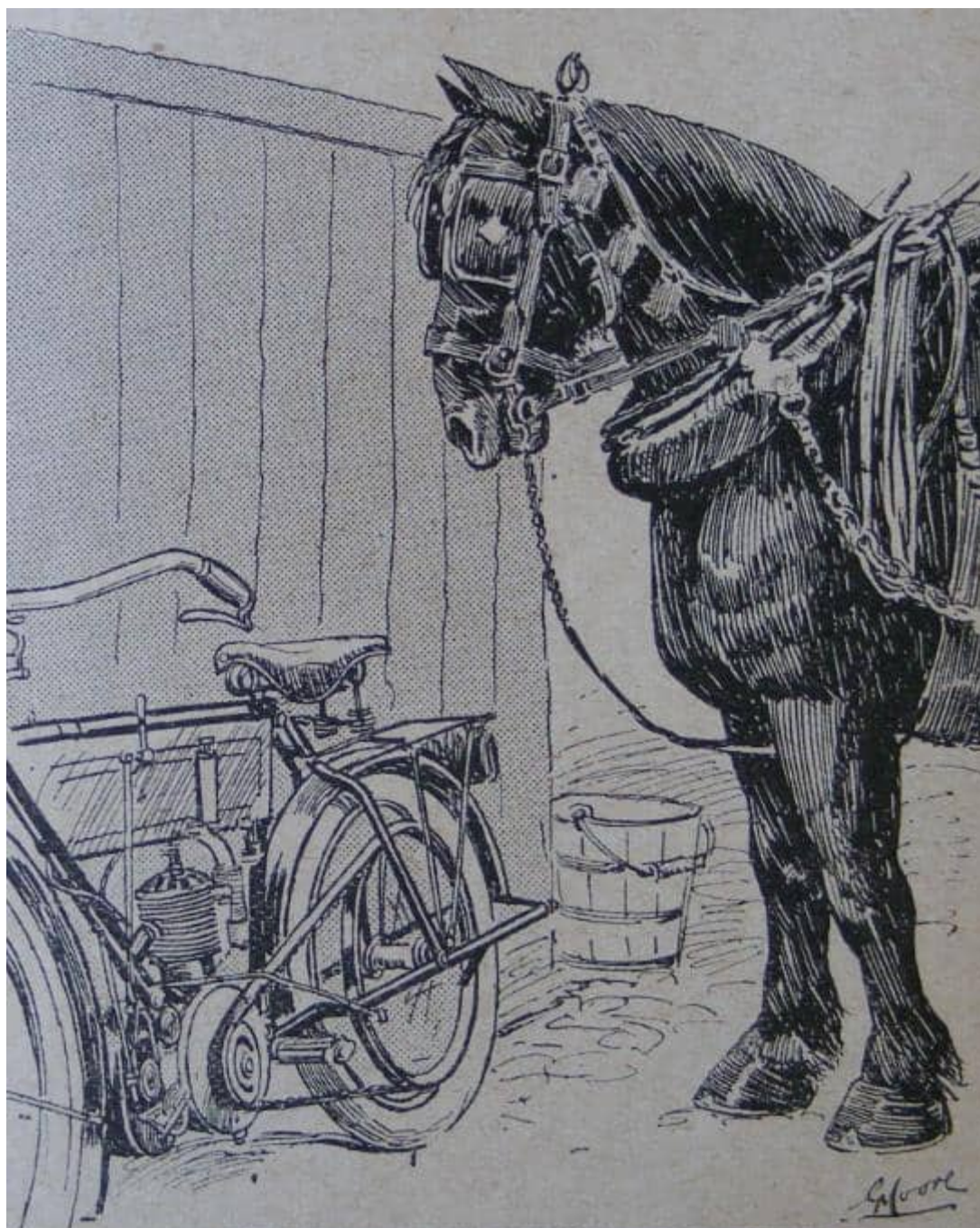
from the Green 'Un and was published in 1902.

This is

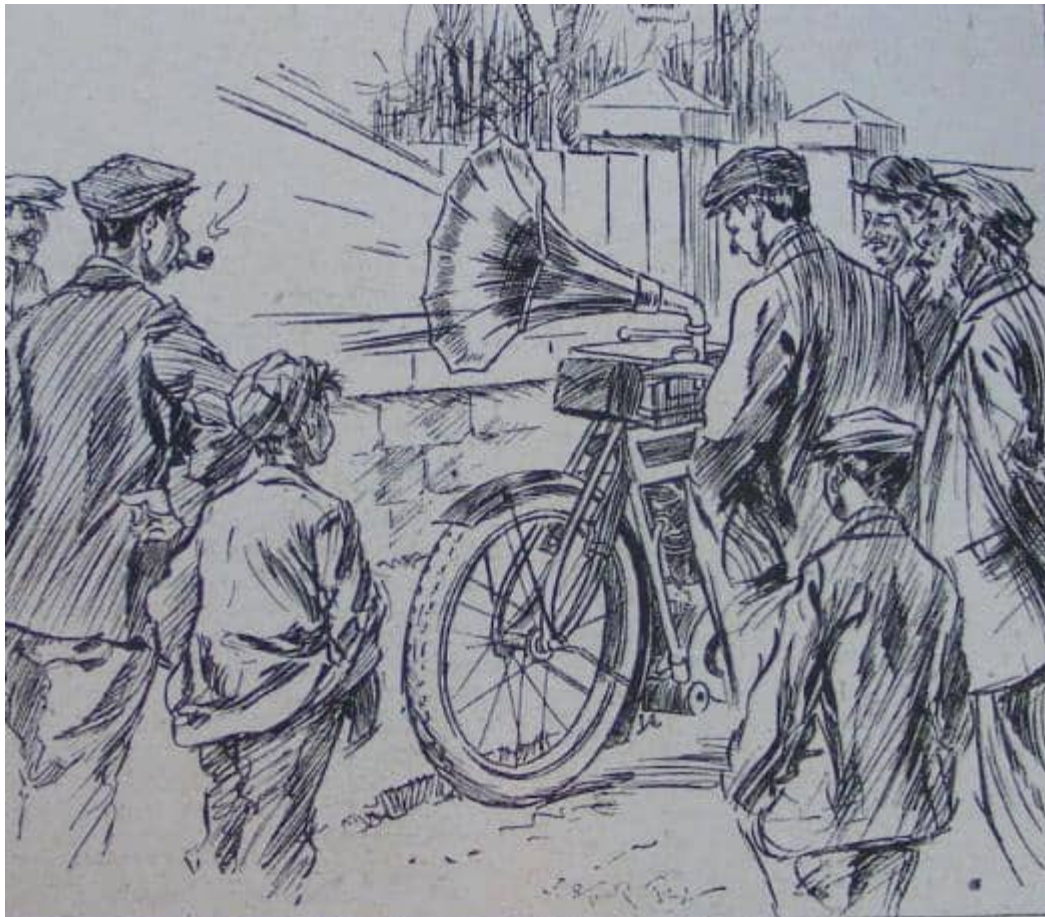


As the caption writer put it in 1910: “The joy of the open road! What can compare with the pleasure of the motor cyclist when weather is fine and engine runs well.”





Suffolk Punch: "If they call you  $3\frac{1}{2}$  h.p. what ought they to call me?"



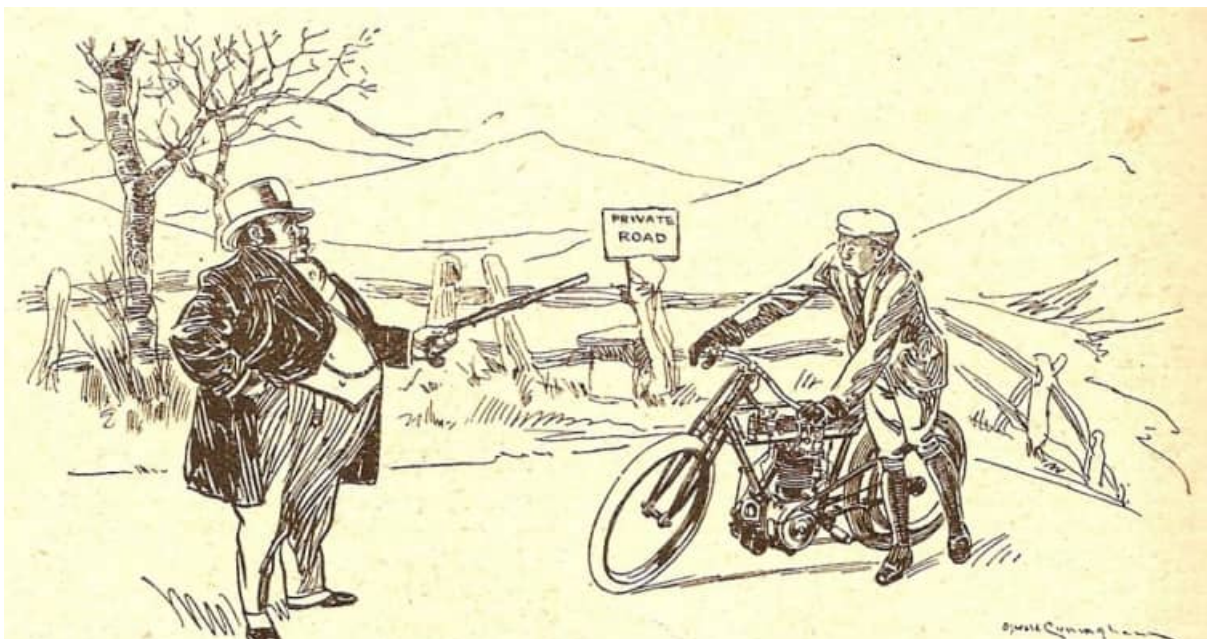
The cycle sneak has been tackling bigger game of late, including motor-bicycles. Here is a suggestion. Attach a phonograph to the machine, and set it going when leaving it unattended. The crowd that will immediately collect will spoil any chance that a thief might have of annexing the machine.





“Pixby, after earnest entreaty from

Mrs P, has purchased a twin two-speed machine with sidecar at the show (instead of the high-power single-cylinder solo he had in view) and wonders whether the placard is applicable.” Plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose, innit?



Irate Landowner: “Do you not see that notice? You cannot pass here save over my dead body.”

Motorcyclist: “Oh, I’ll go back. I’ve done enough hill-climbing to-day.”

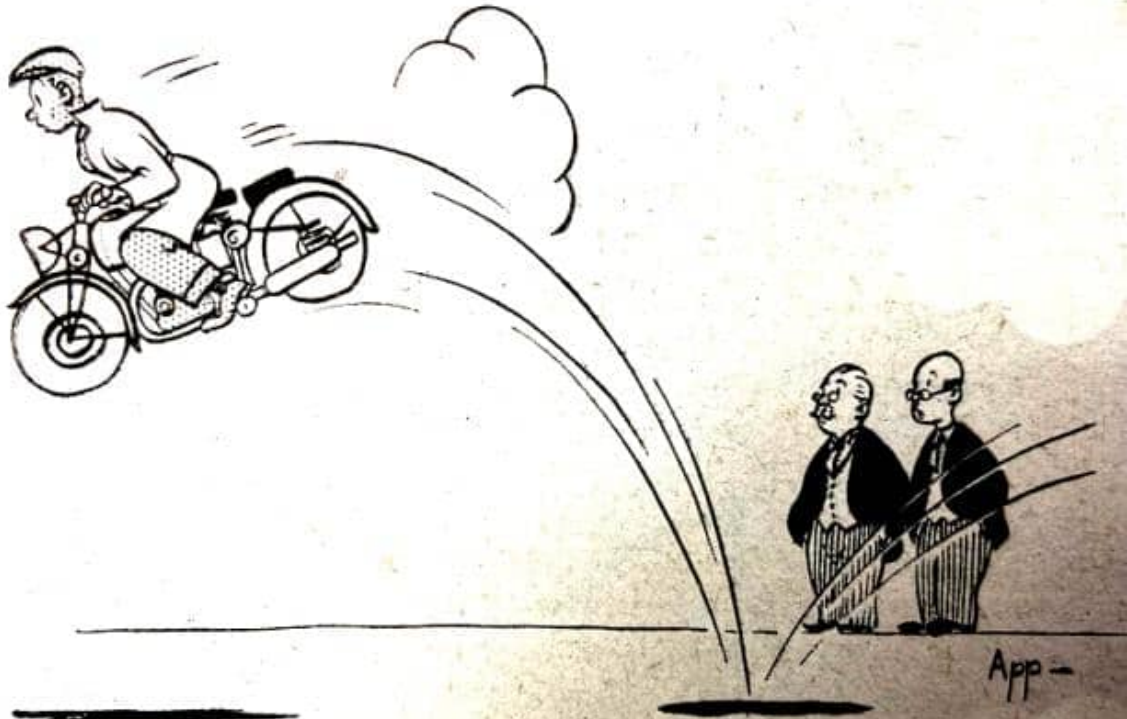


1910

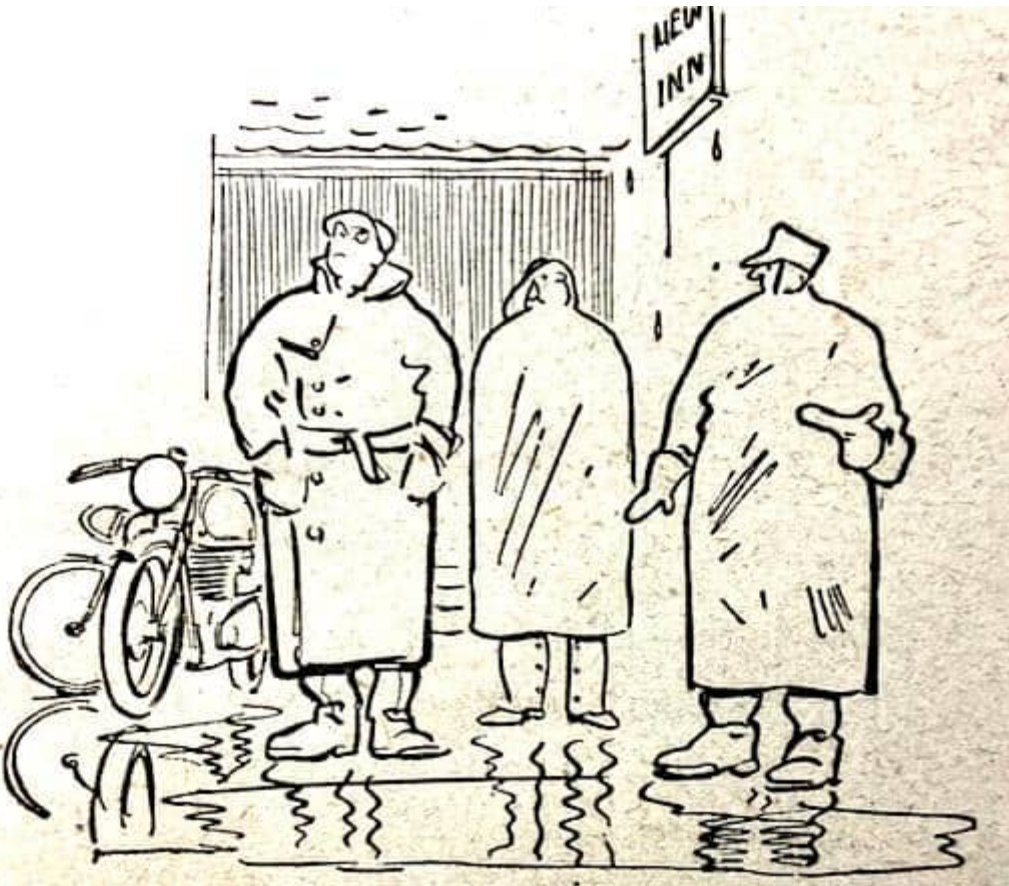
caption...She: "Do motor cyclists often lose their lives?" He: "Not more than once." Yes, this joke is THAT old.

*The next couple of cartoons appeared in the Blue 'Un in 1939.*

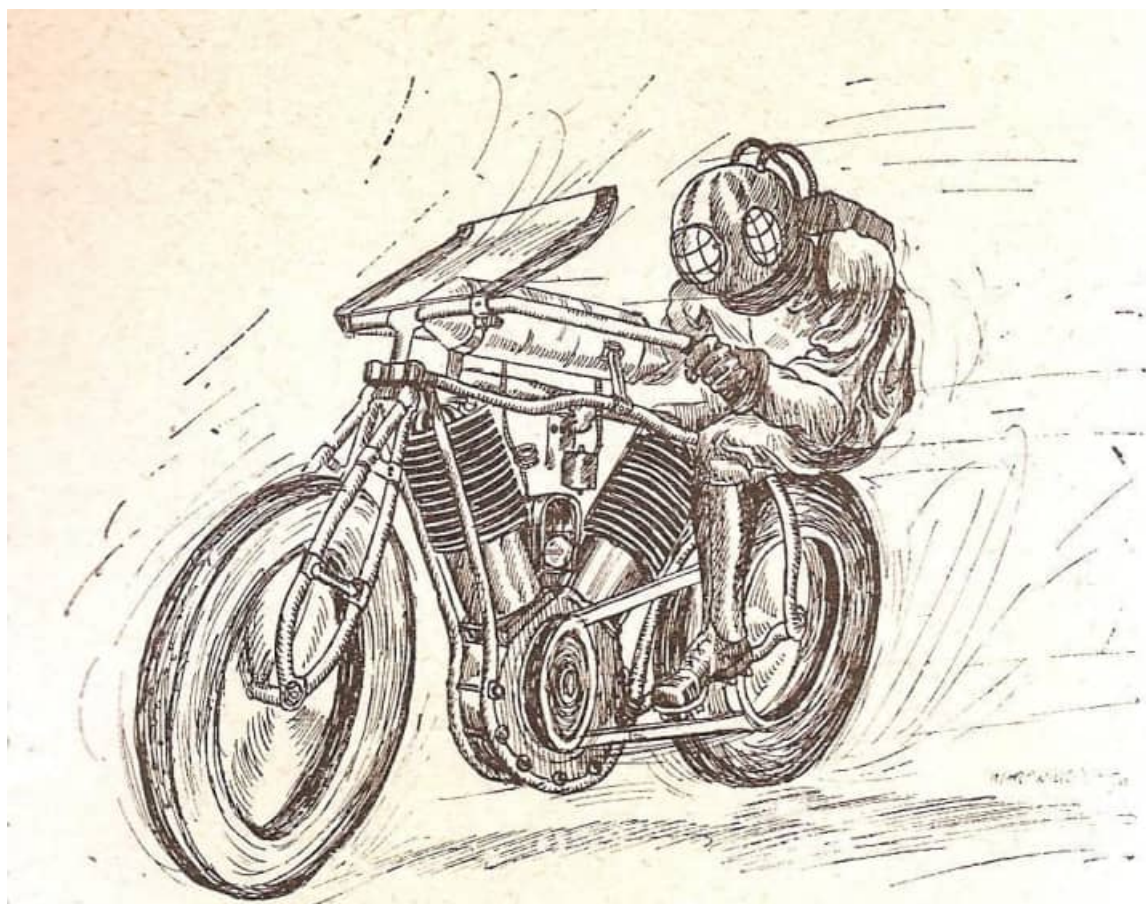




*"I'm afraid your improved spring frame is not a success, Jorkins"*



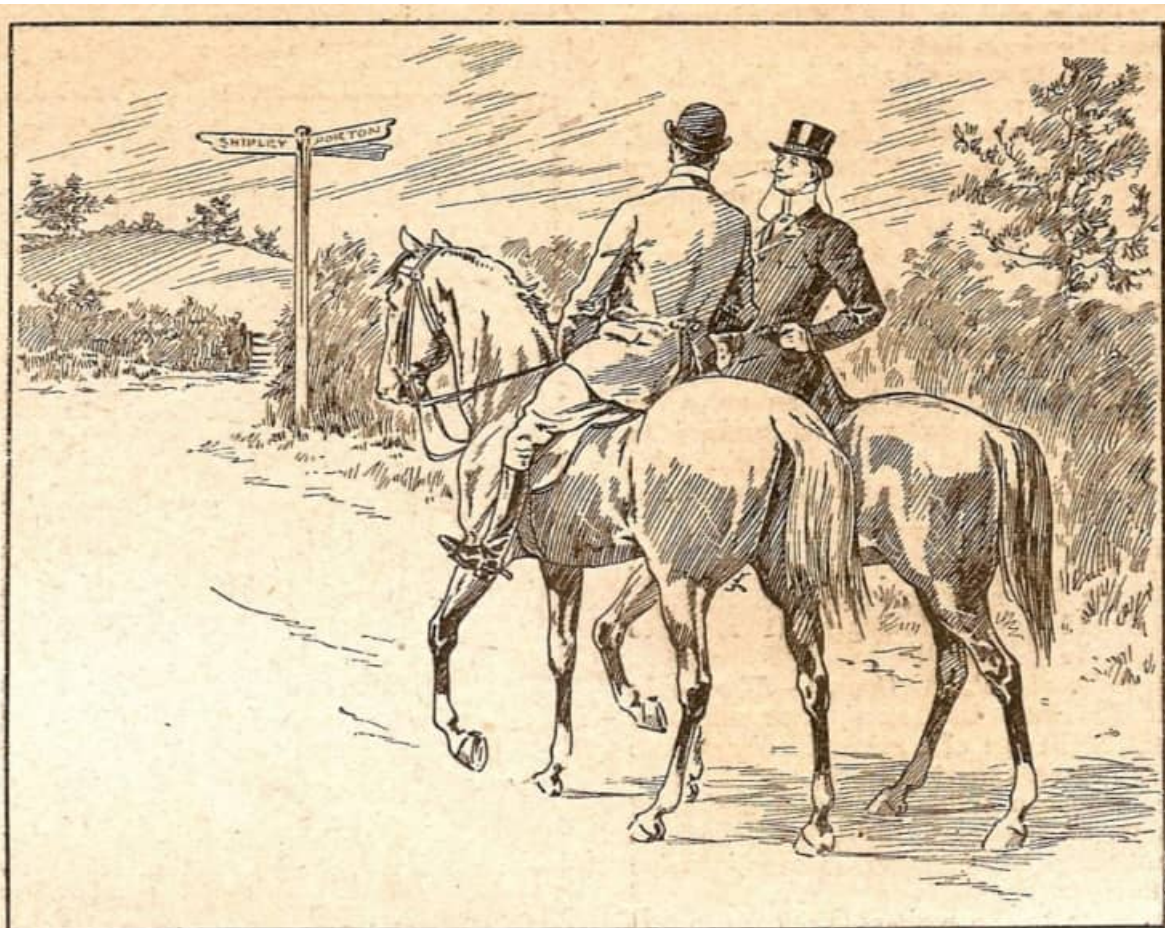
"Confound it—now it's stopped!"



**A POSSIBLE 120 PER HOUR.**

**40 h.p. engine, 7 in. car tyres, and windscreen.  
The helmet permits the rider to breathe in the  
vacuum created behind the windscreen!**



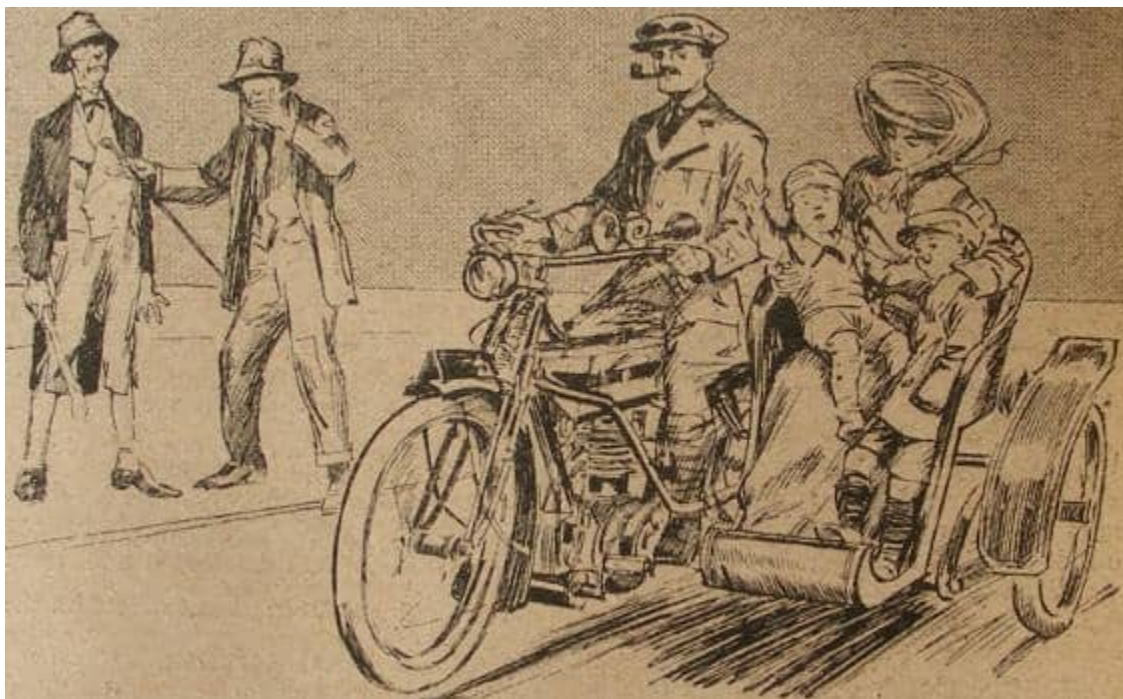
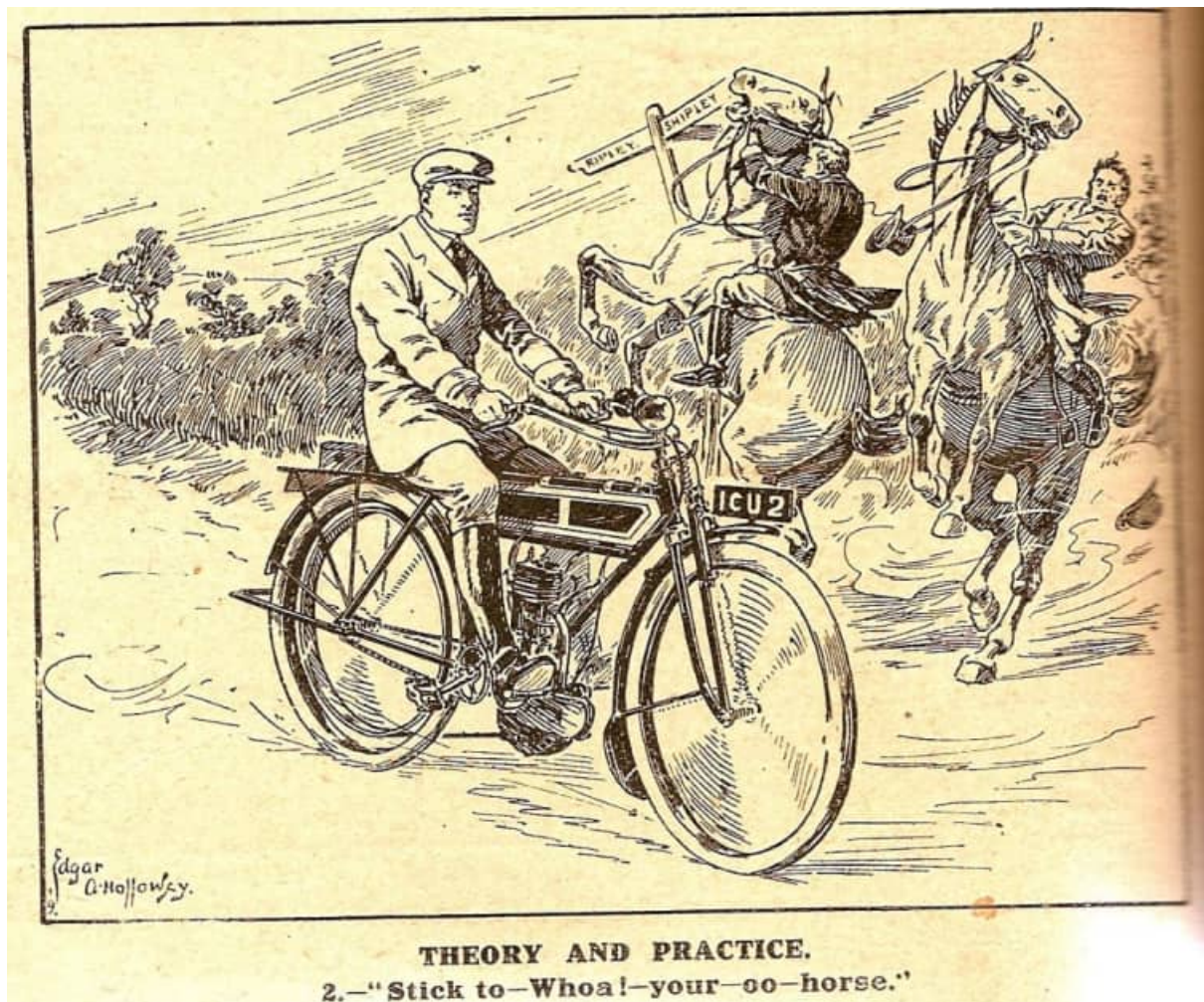


#### THEORY AND PRACTICE.

1.—Sporting: "I think I'll dispose of my horse and go in for a motor-bicycle."

Horsey: "No, old fellow, they are such dangerous machines. Take my advice and—"

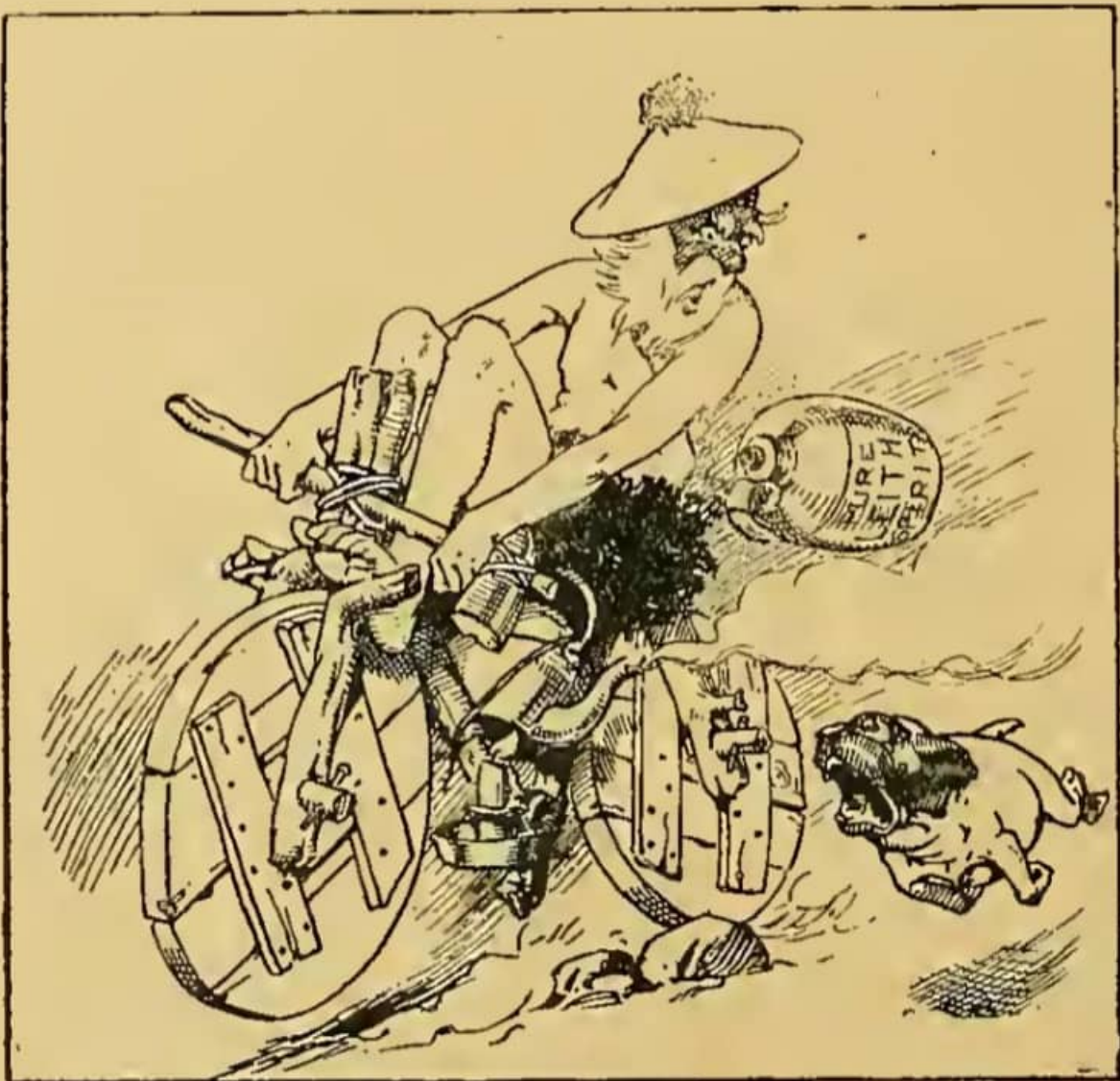




Here's the politically incorrect caption... Mick: "Goodness, Pat, and phwat is that?" Pat:



“Shure now, and the wicked motor cyclist must have run over a perambulator and can’t get disentangled at all, at all.”



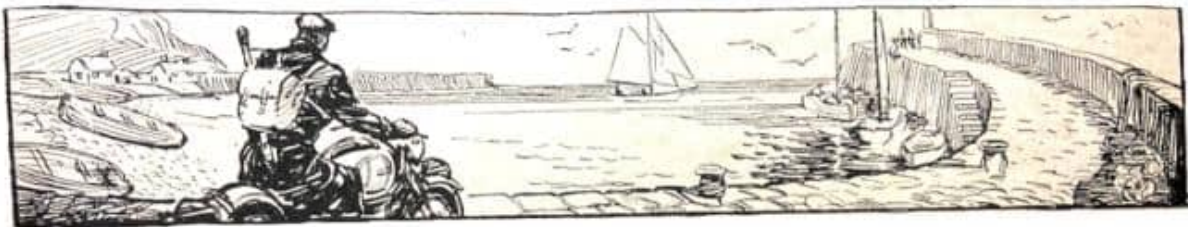
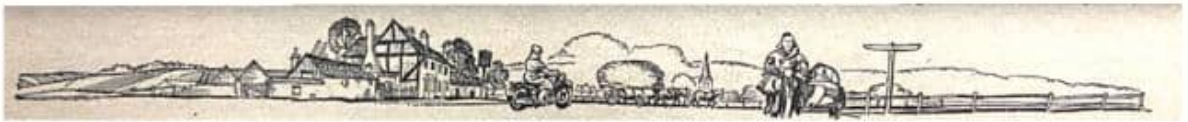
Design on front cover of menu card of the Edinburgh M.C.C.  
fourth annual dinner.



A recently discovered Egyptian mural carving, time of Rameses II., inscribed in Cuneiform and Hieroglyphic. Tho the Ibis-headed God of Time, is evidently supervising an ancient equivalent to a 1910 police trap.











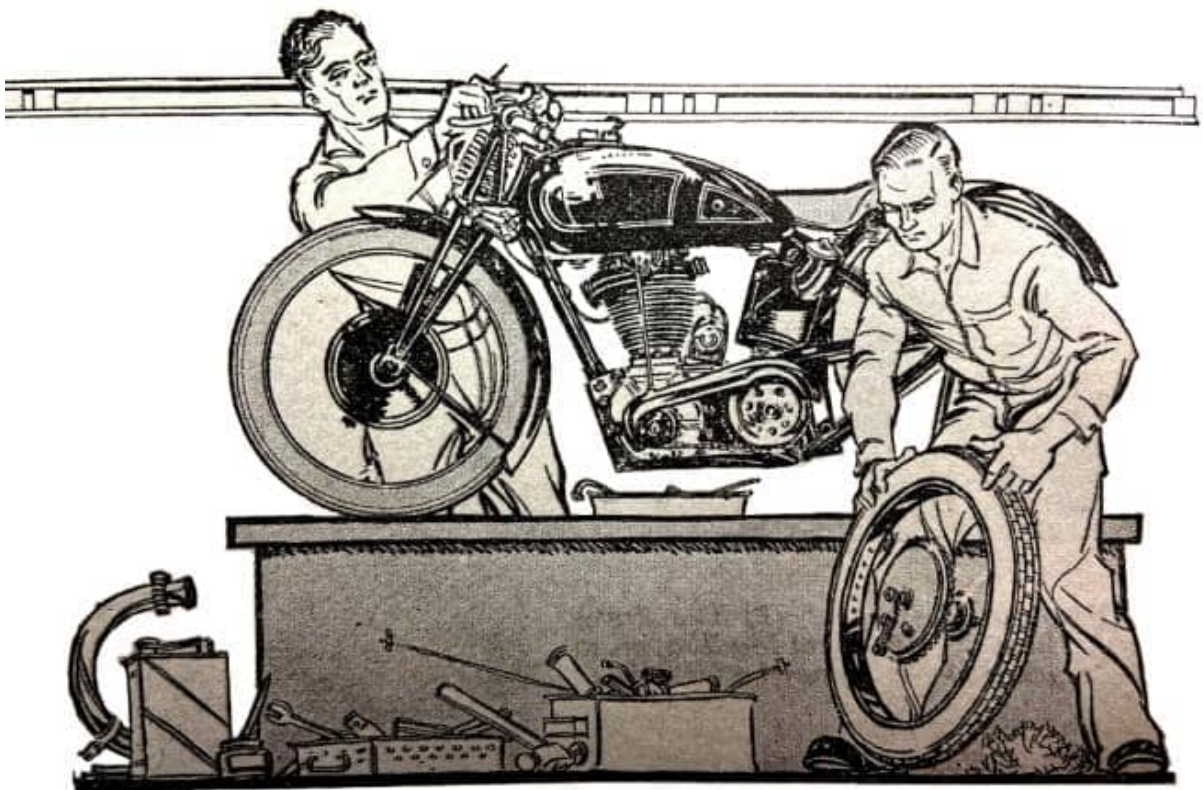
Published in the Green

'Un, in 1911, captioned "Far from the madding crowd". A fine piece of art by any standards.



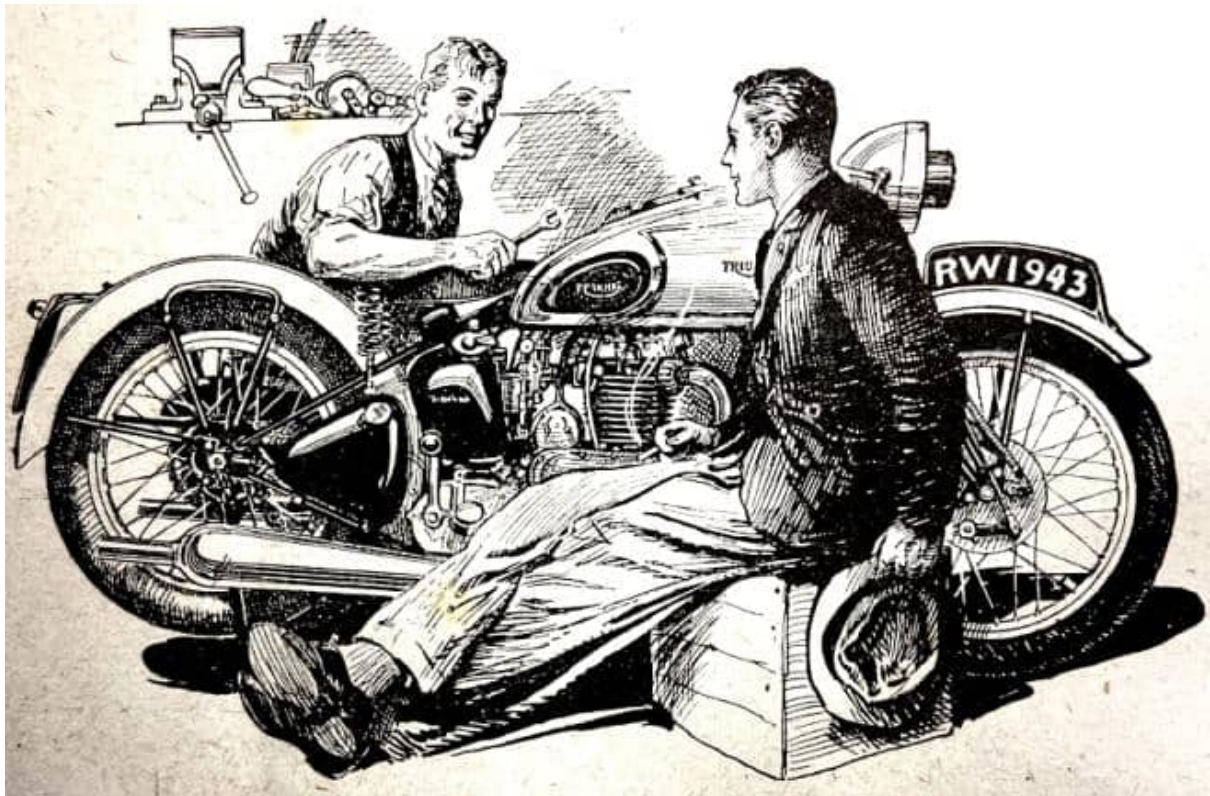


This one's from a 1936 'how to' feature on camp cooking. Remember chaps, when roughing it in the wilderness you should still wear a tie.

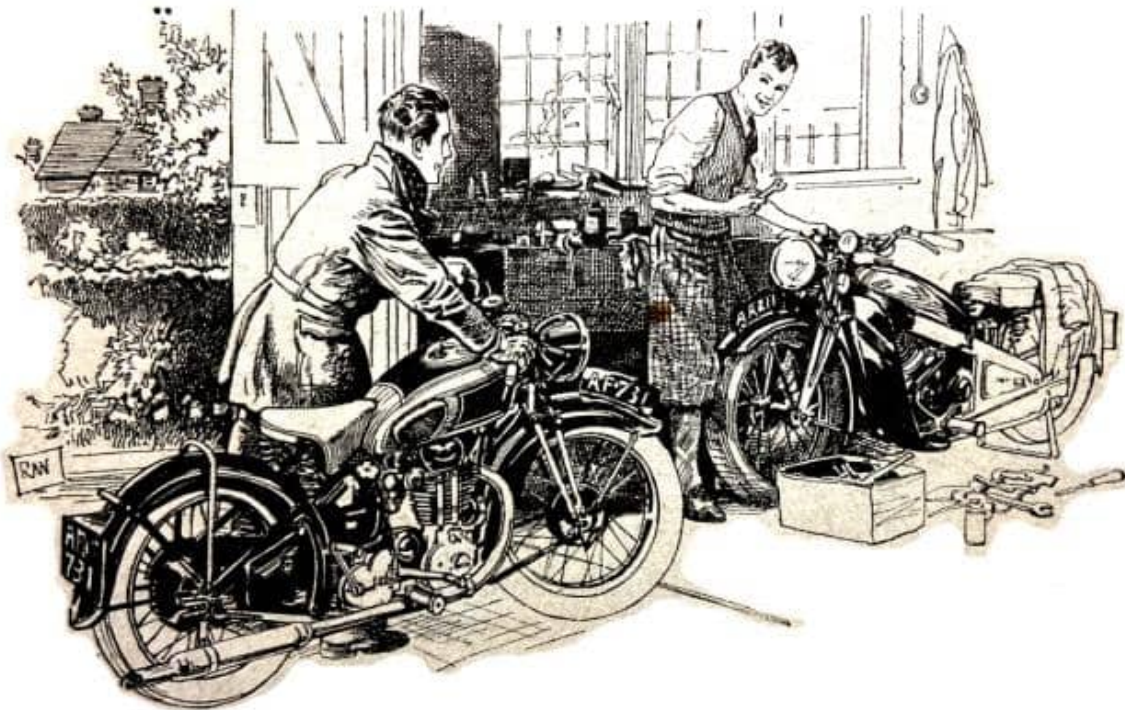


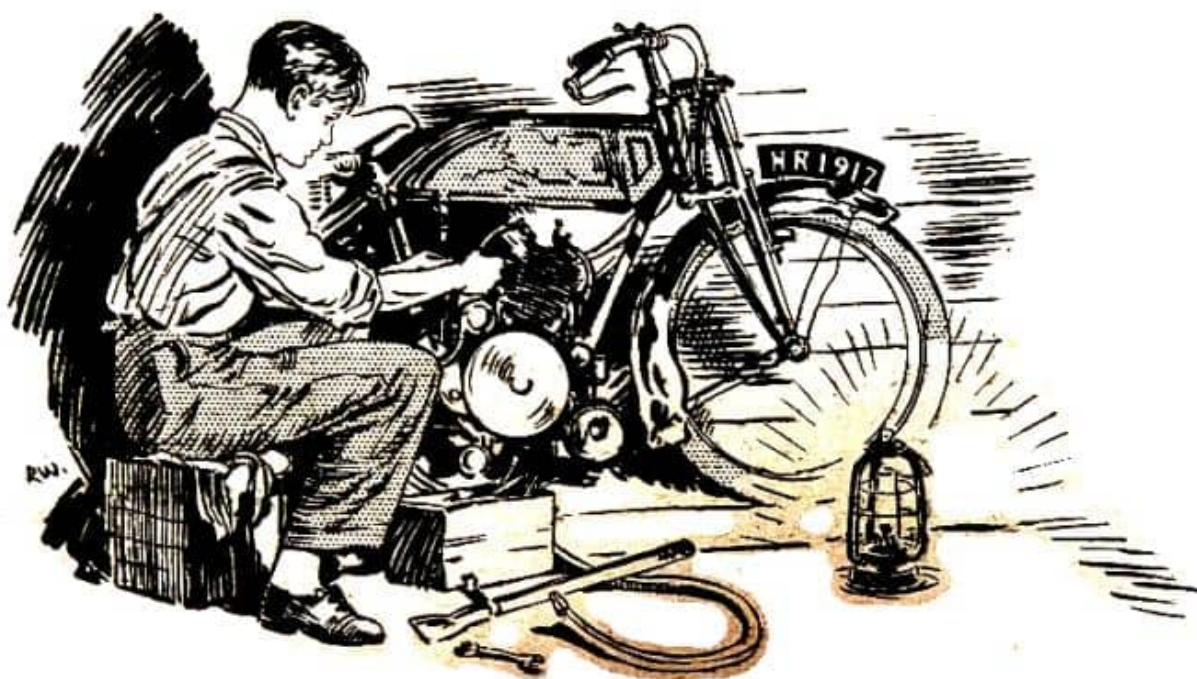
...and this smashing artwork appeared in *Motor Cycling* in 1938 as the logo on a technical advice column.





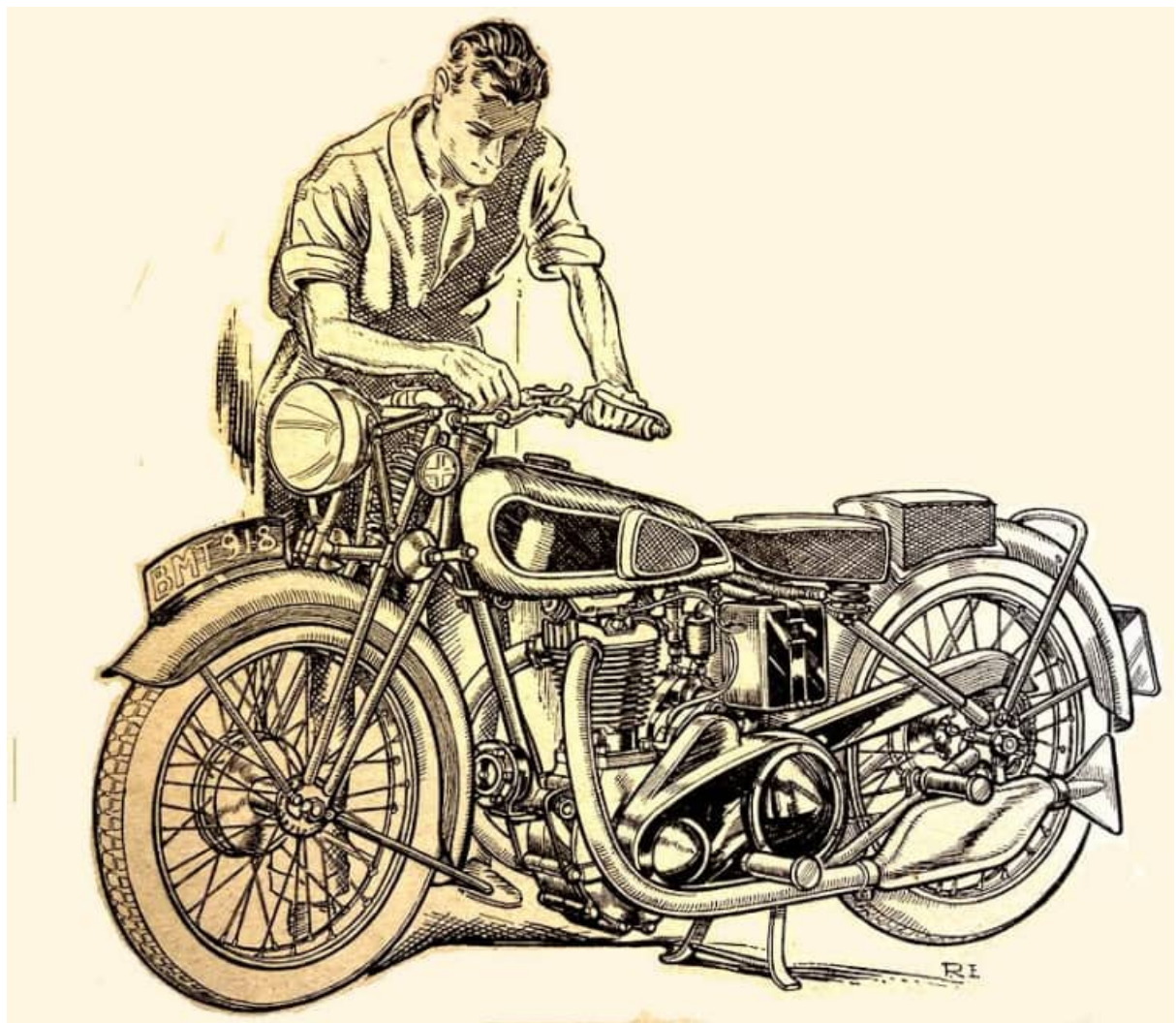
This one illustrated a 'make and mend' feature published in the Blue 'Un in 1945.



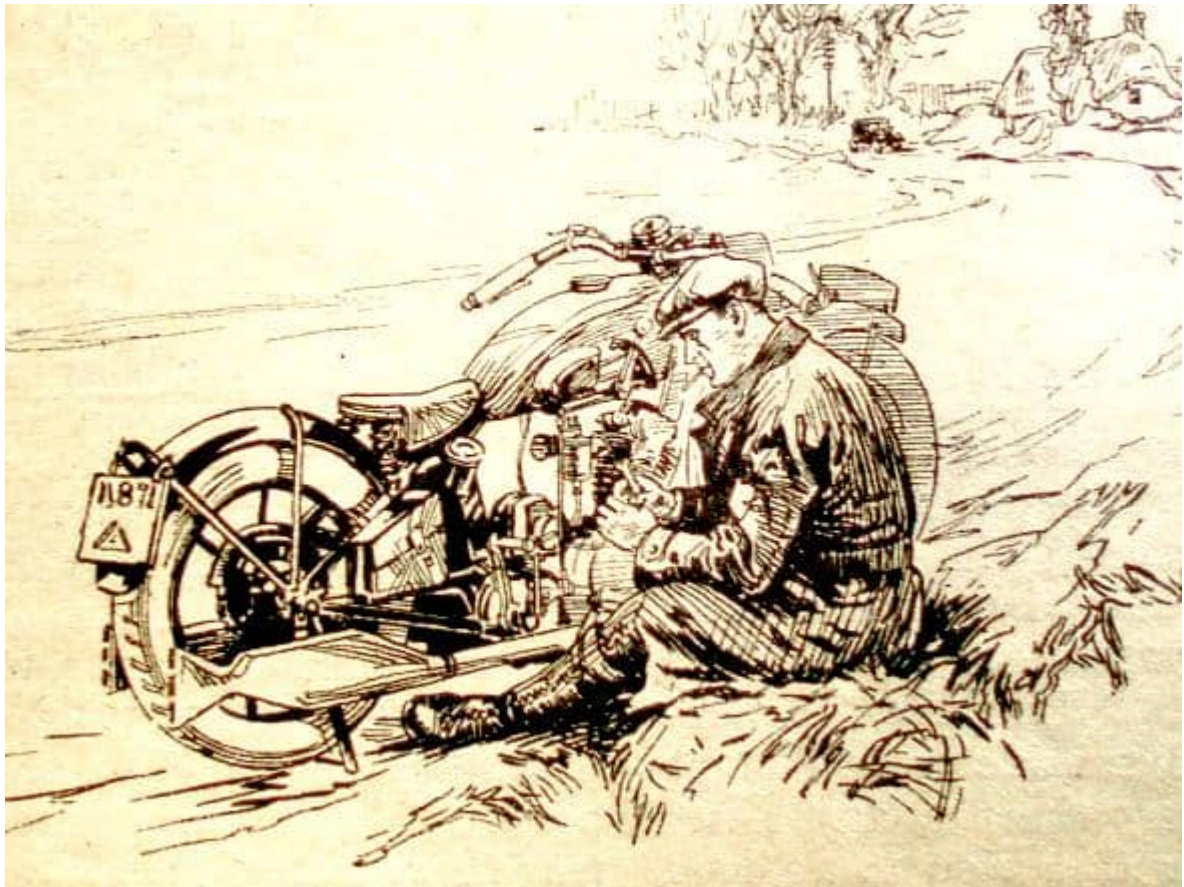


**"You would see by the flickering light of an oil-lamp, a youth bending busily over a most dilapidated . . . motor cycle"**

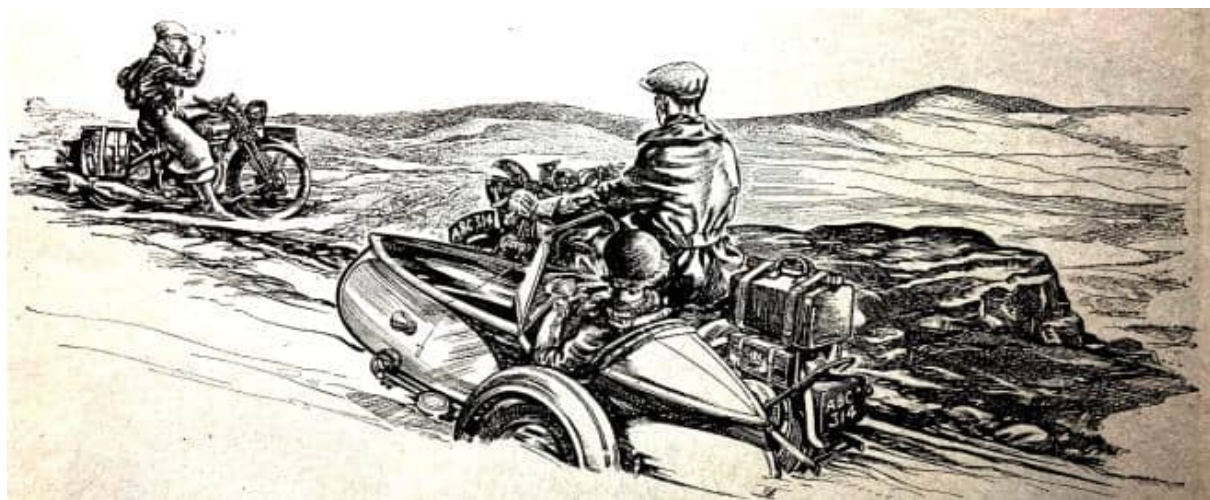
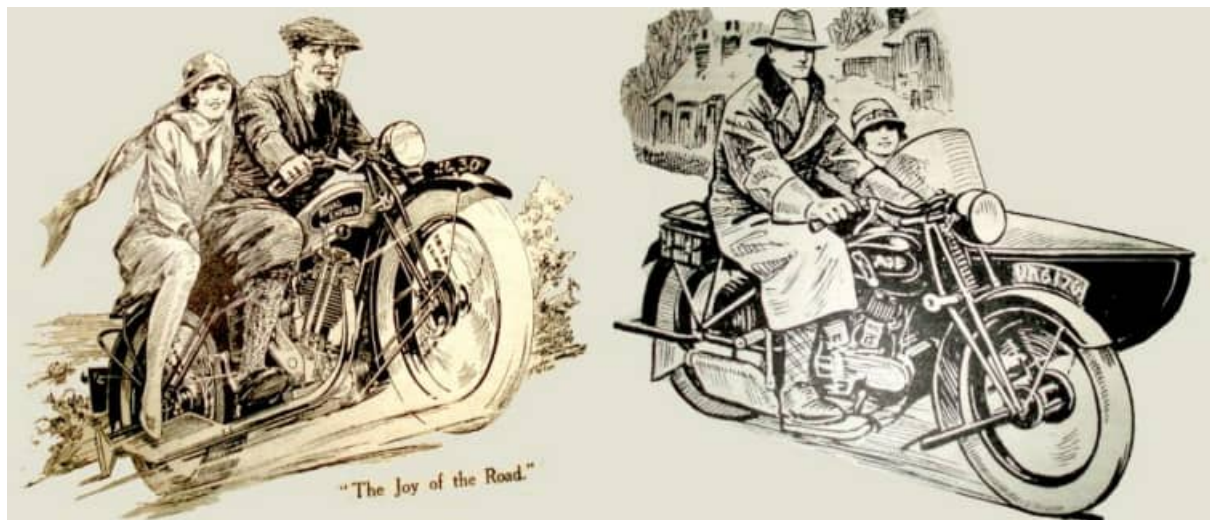




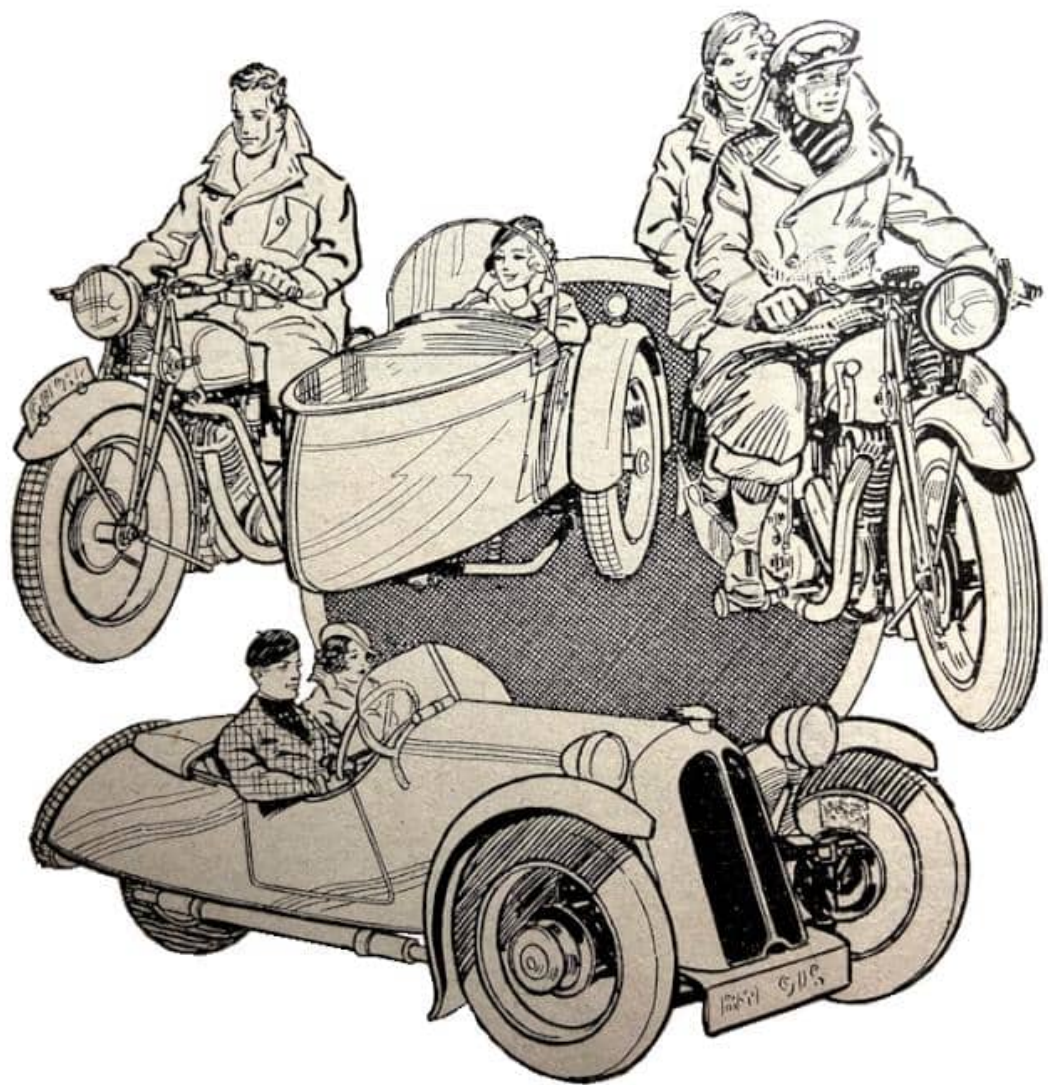




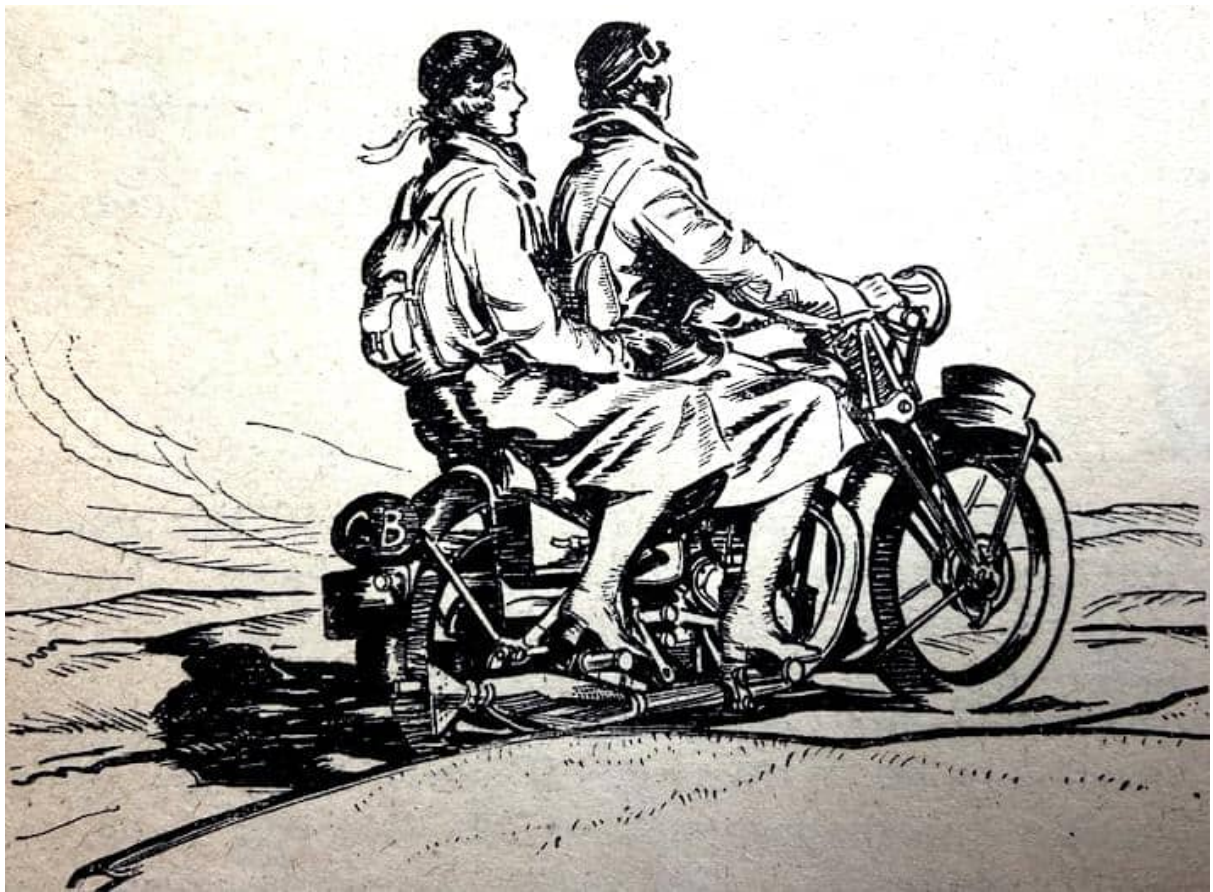
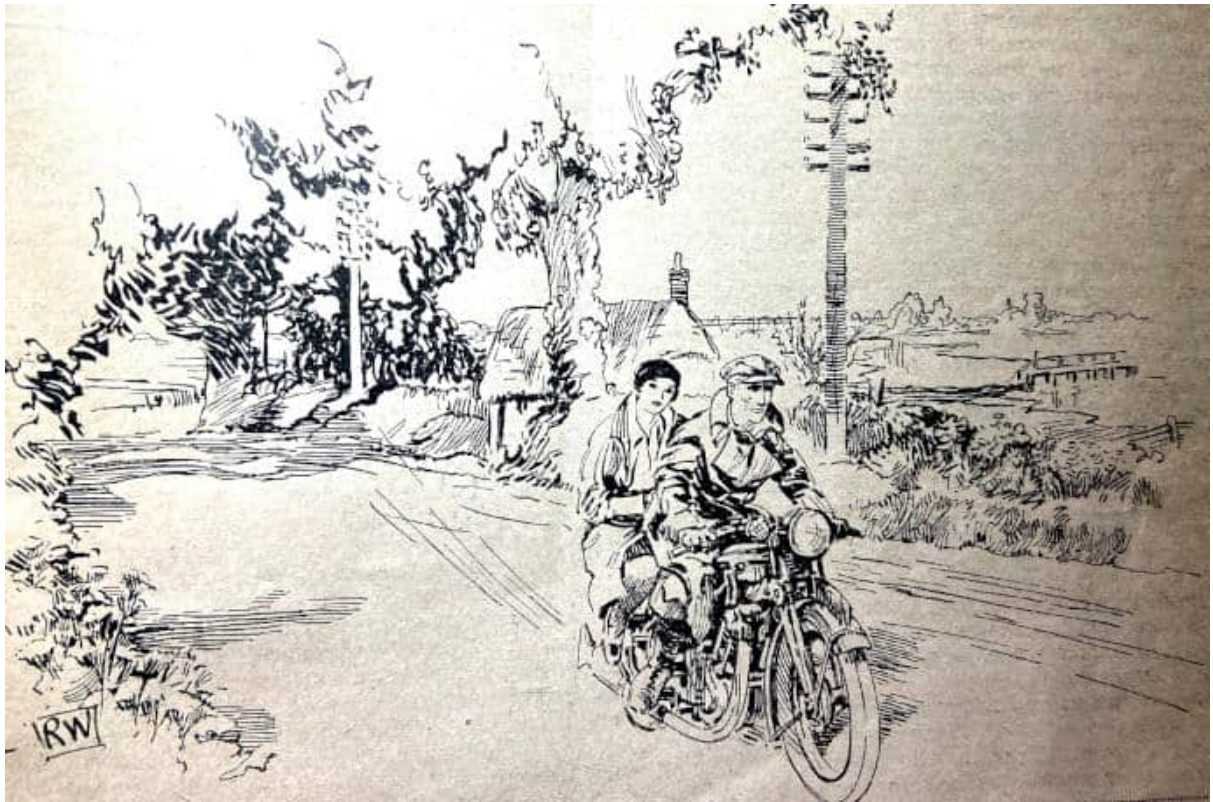




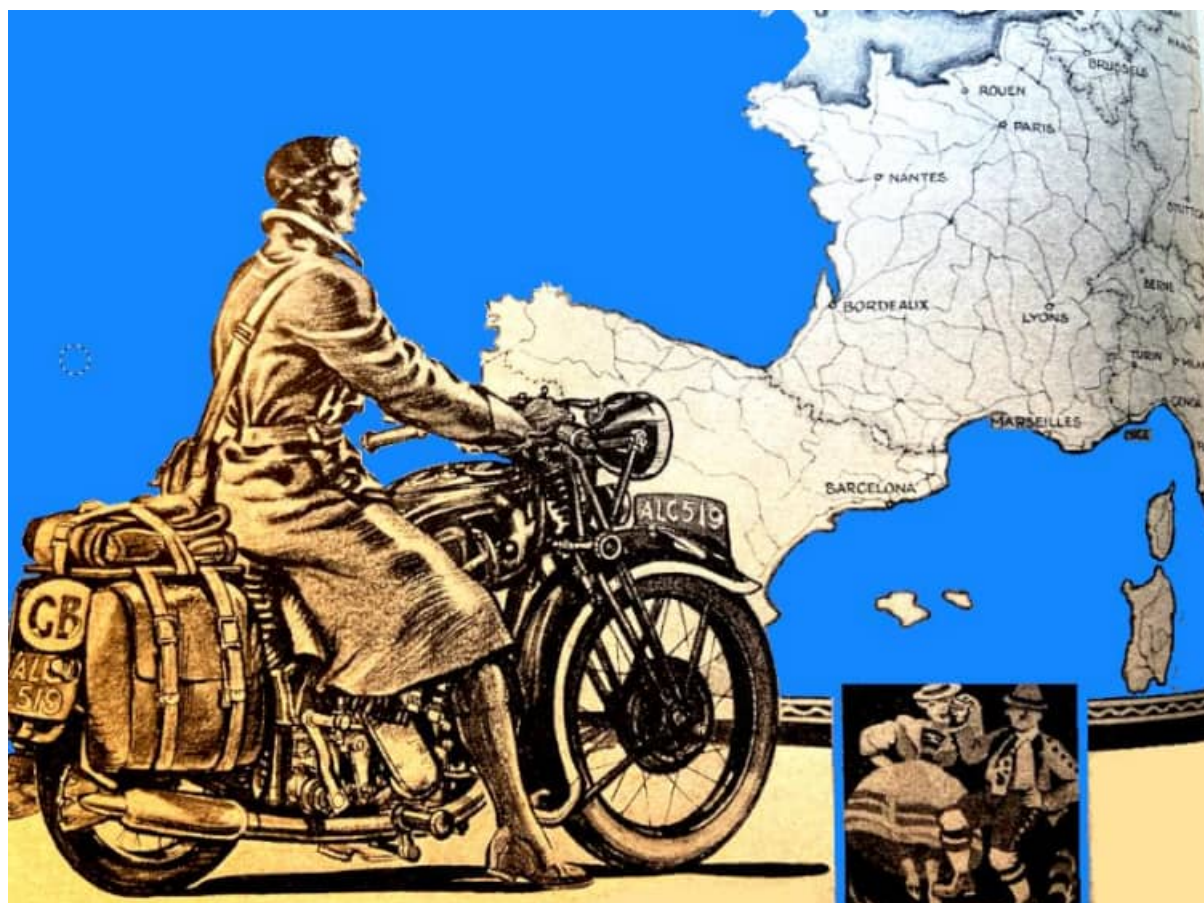
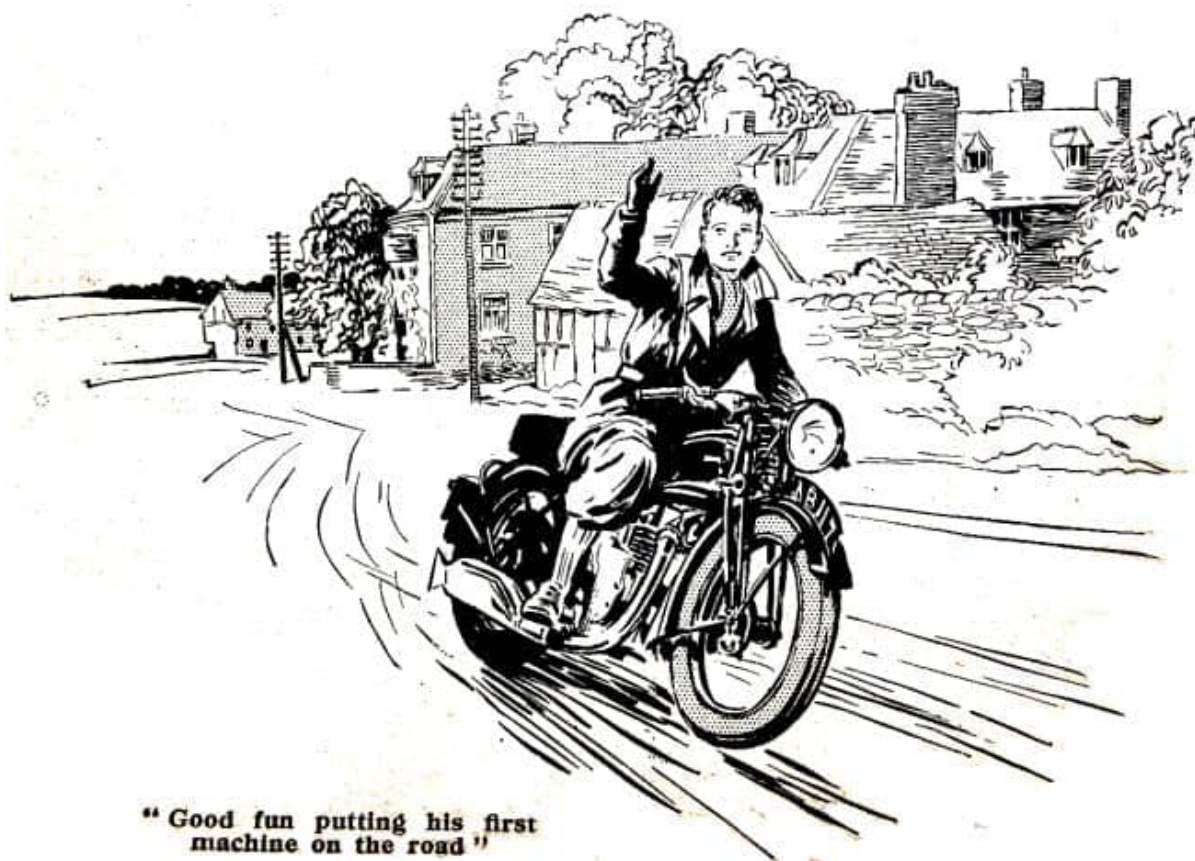




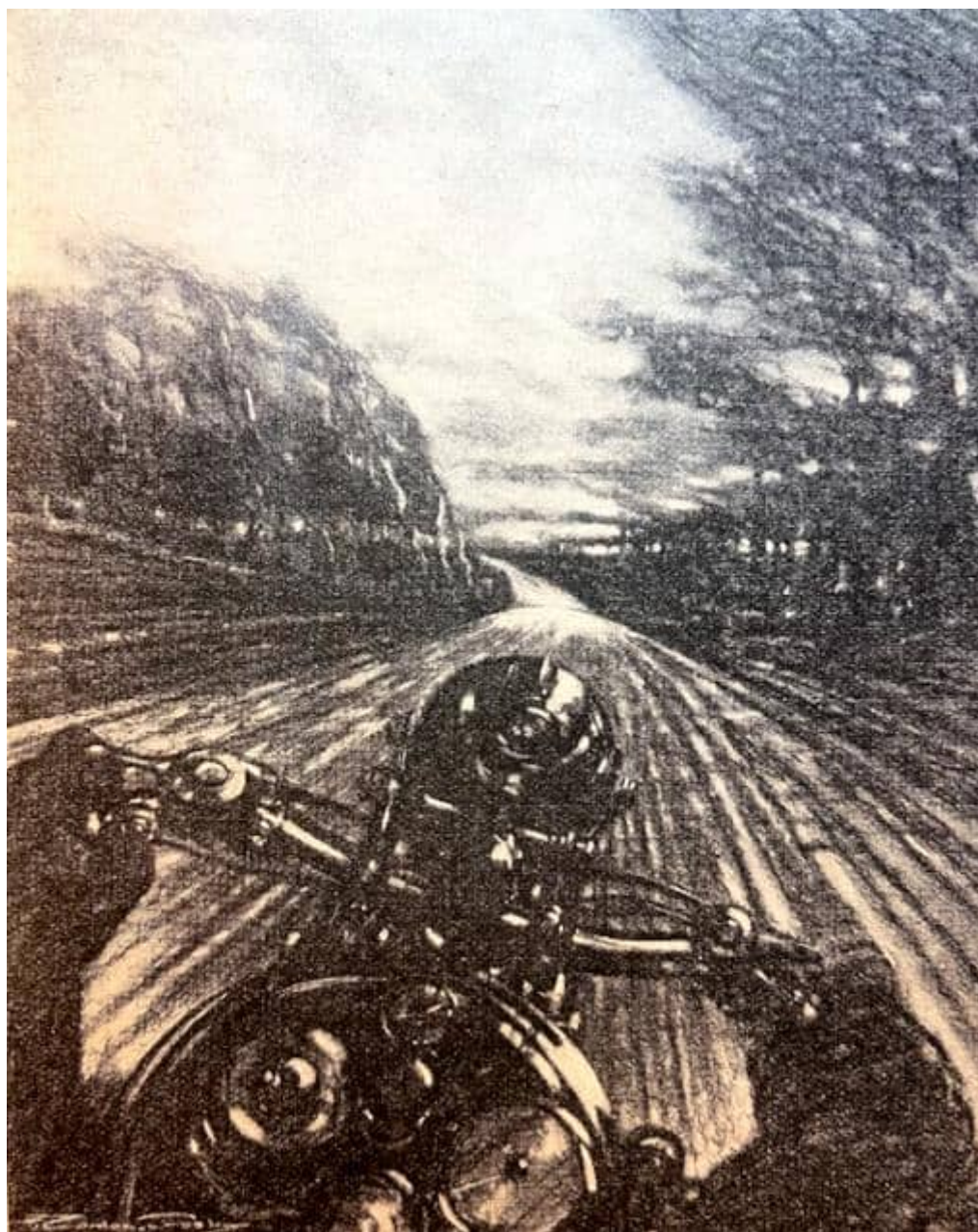


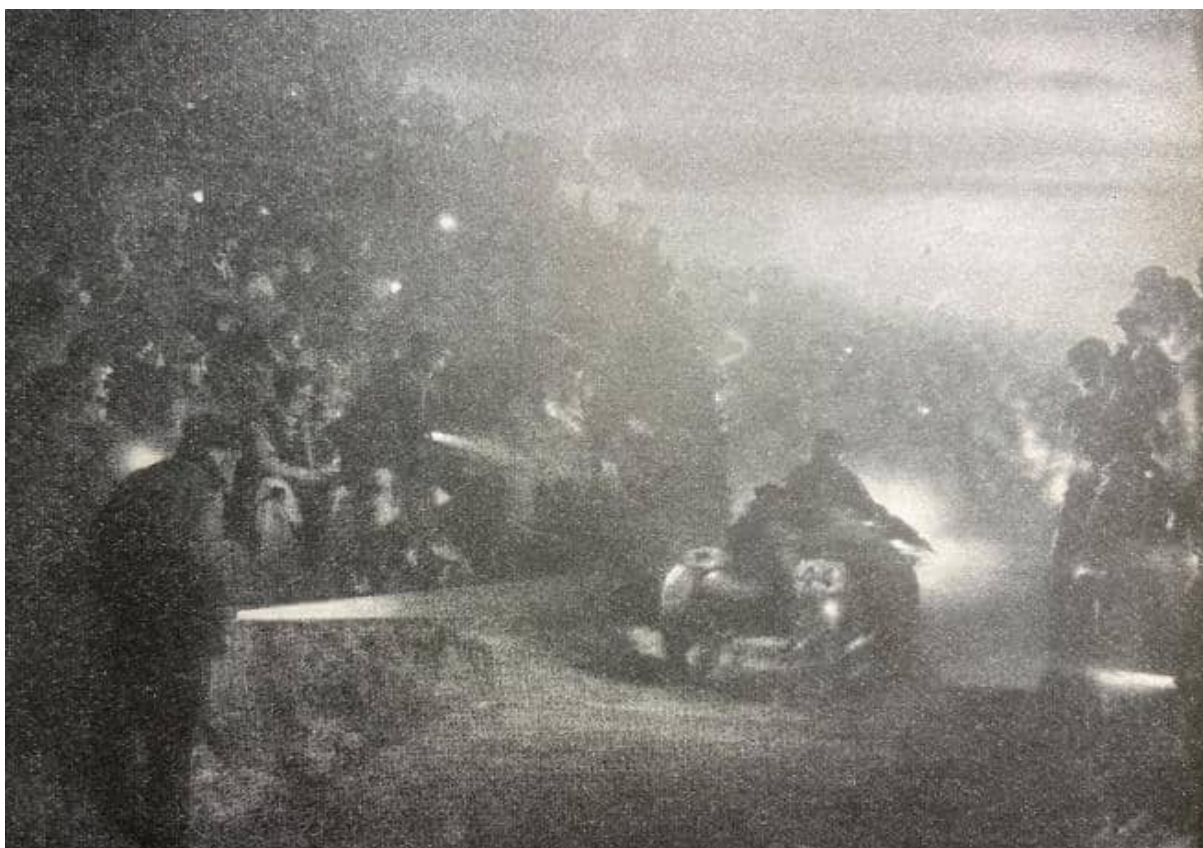








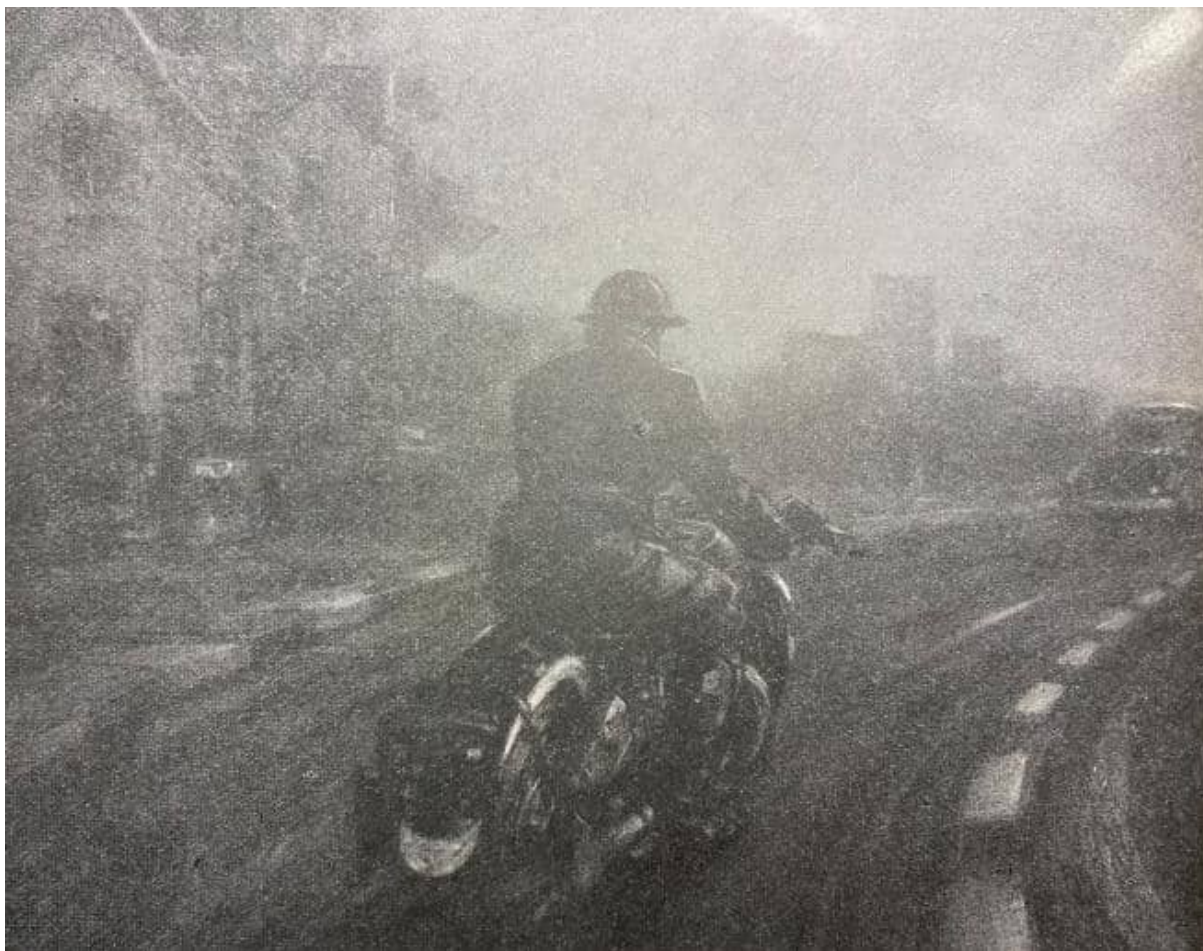




1939: The Doverhay checkpoint, during the final Landsend Trial before war stopped play.

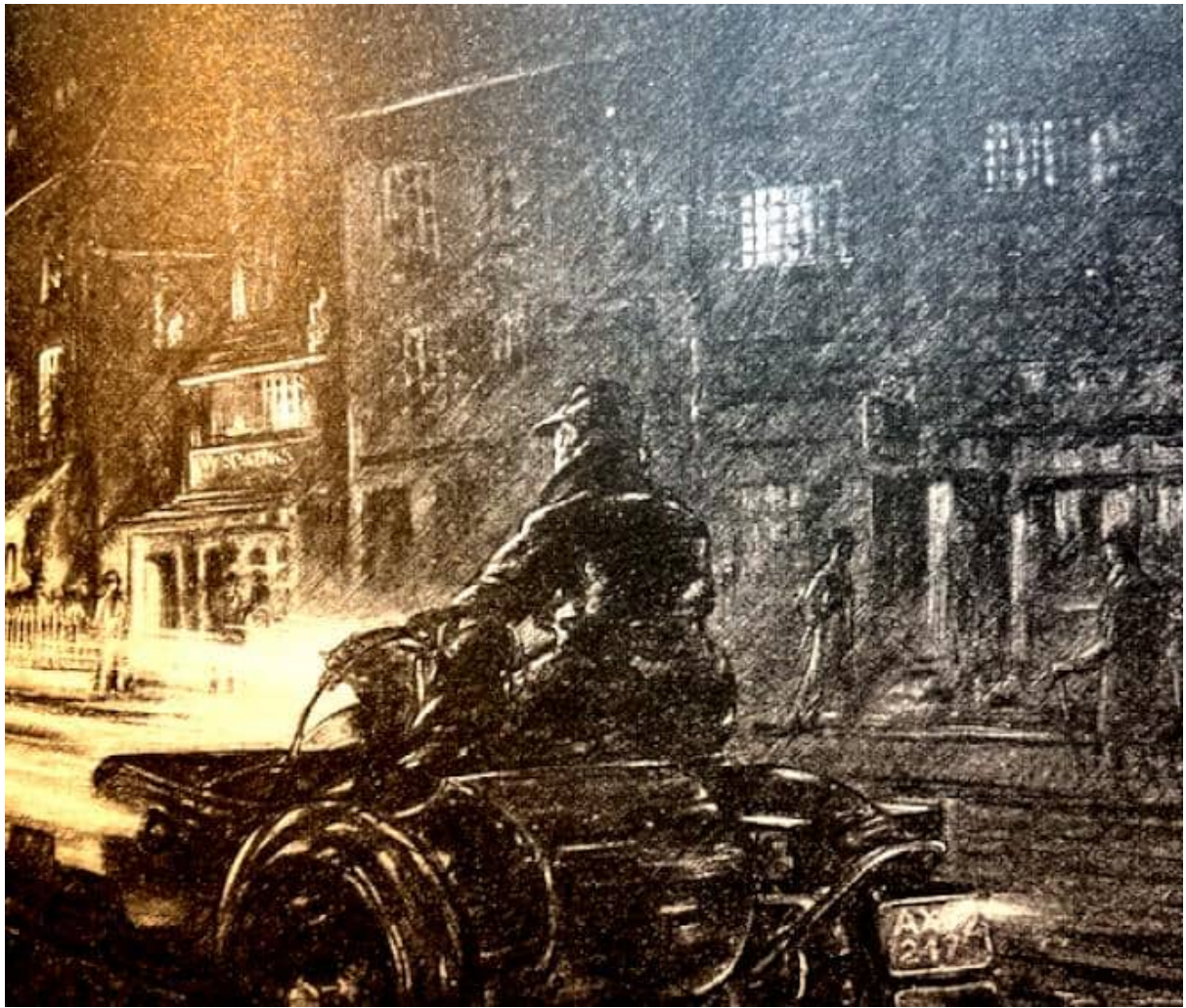






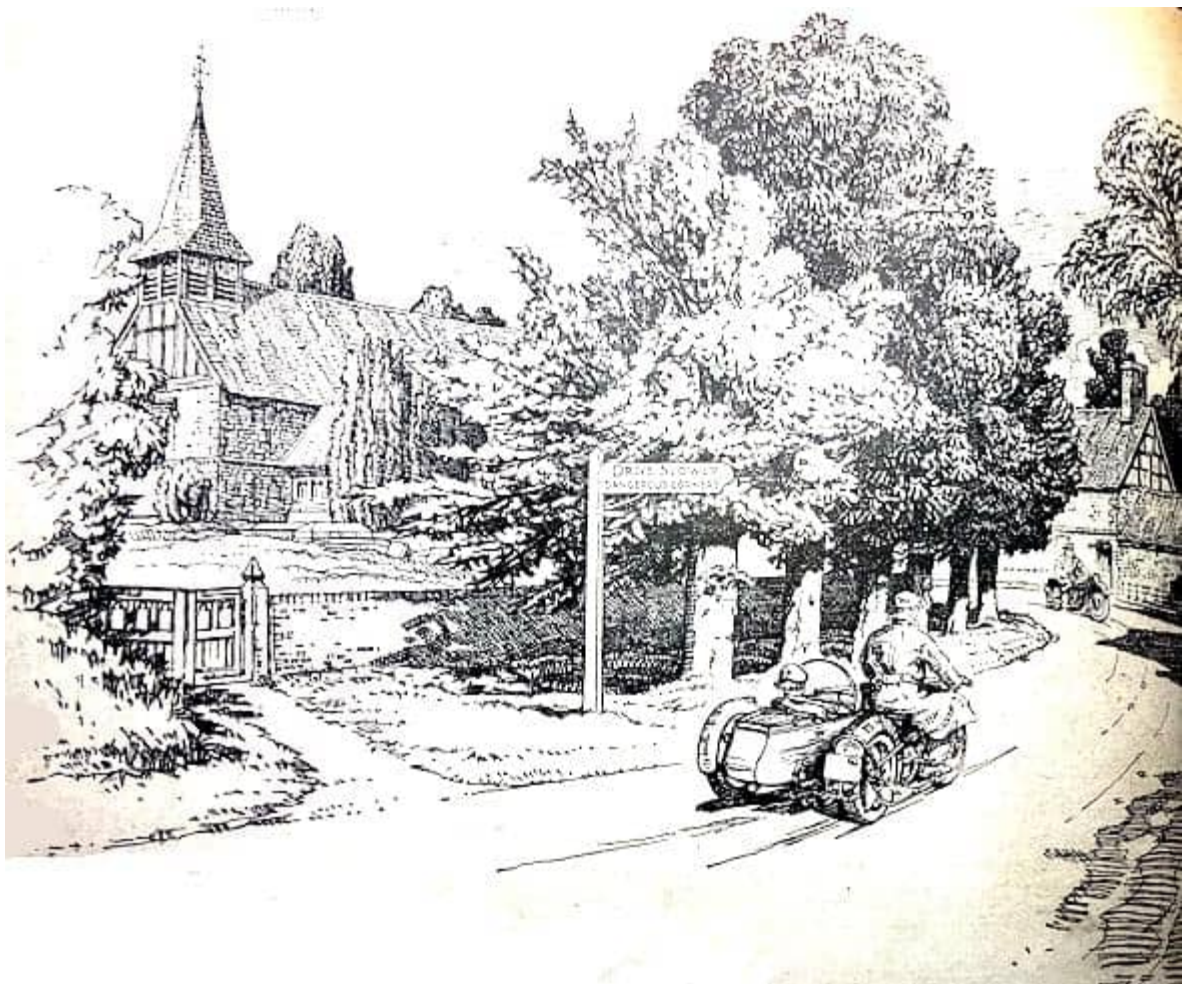
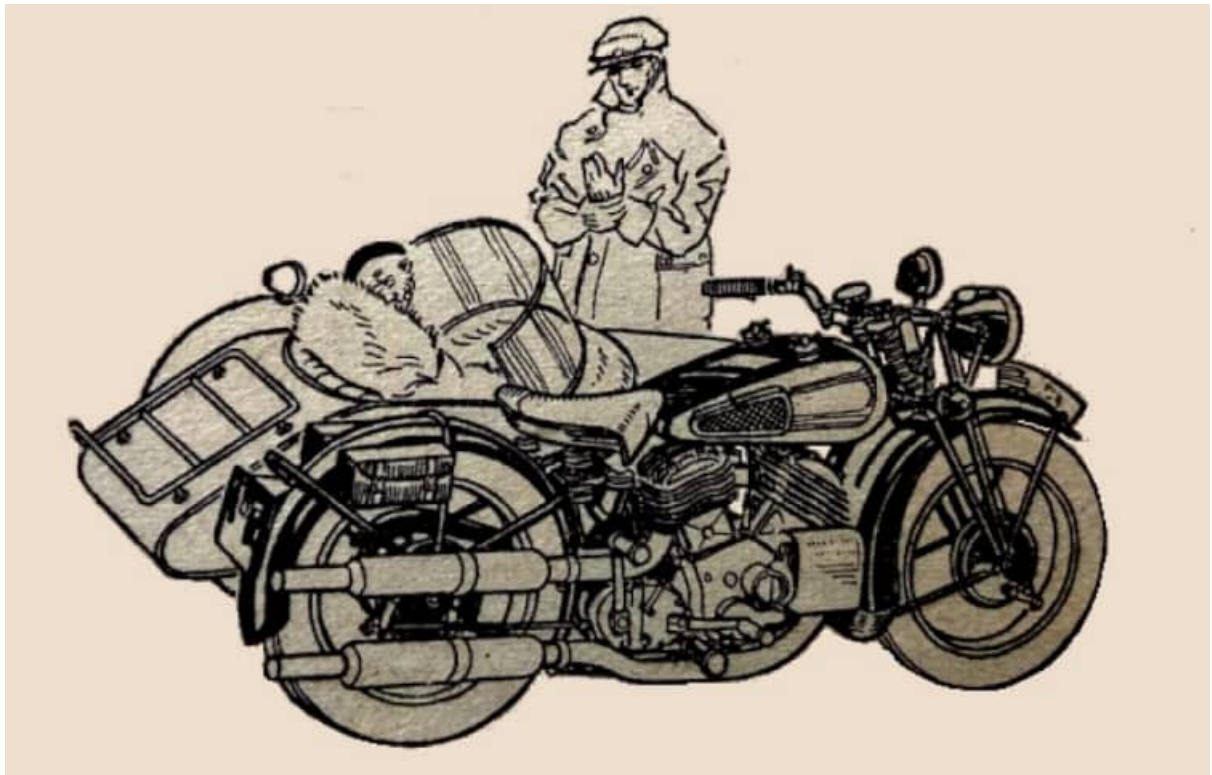
1939: The blackout...



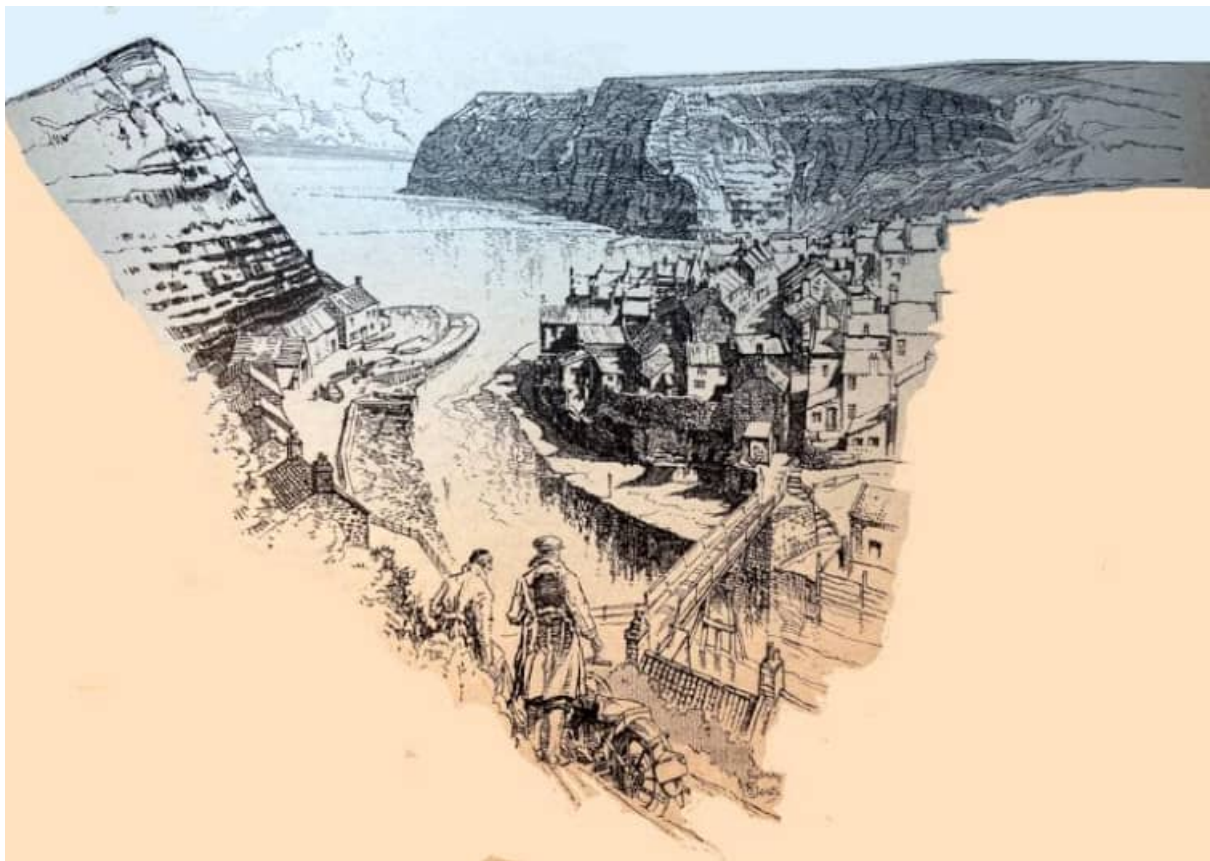
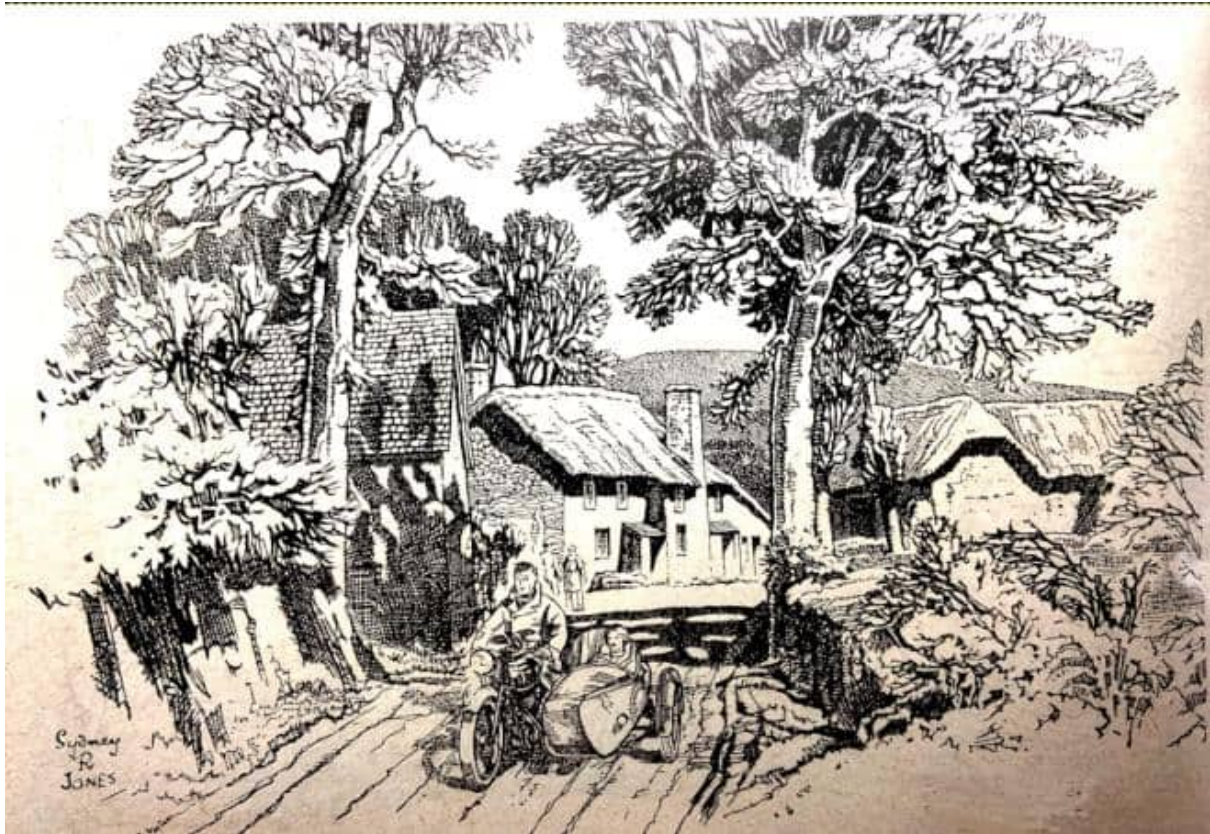












Staithes, Yorks, circa 1937.

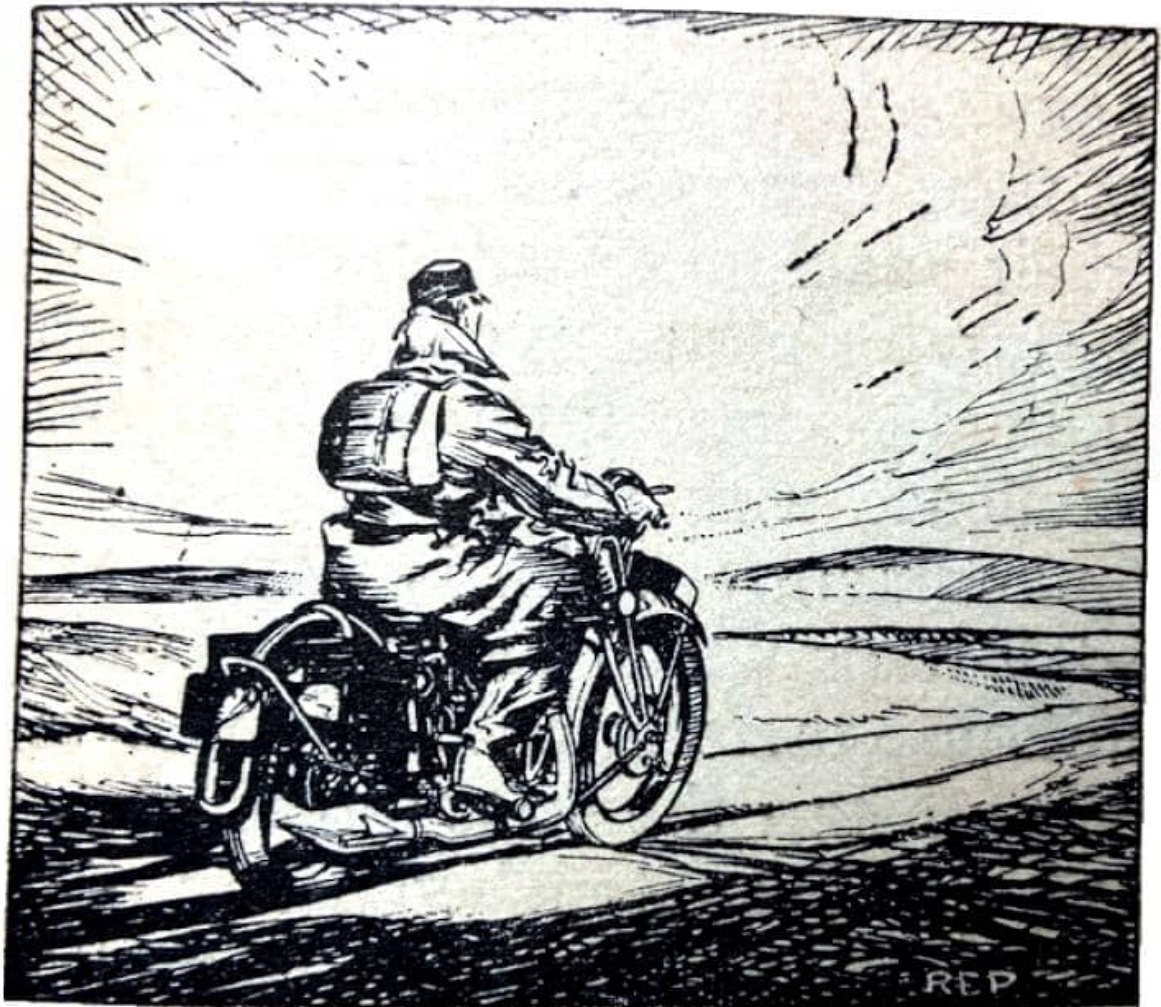




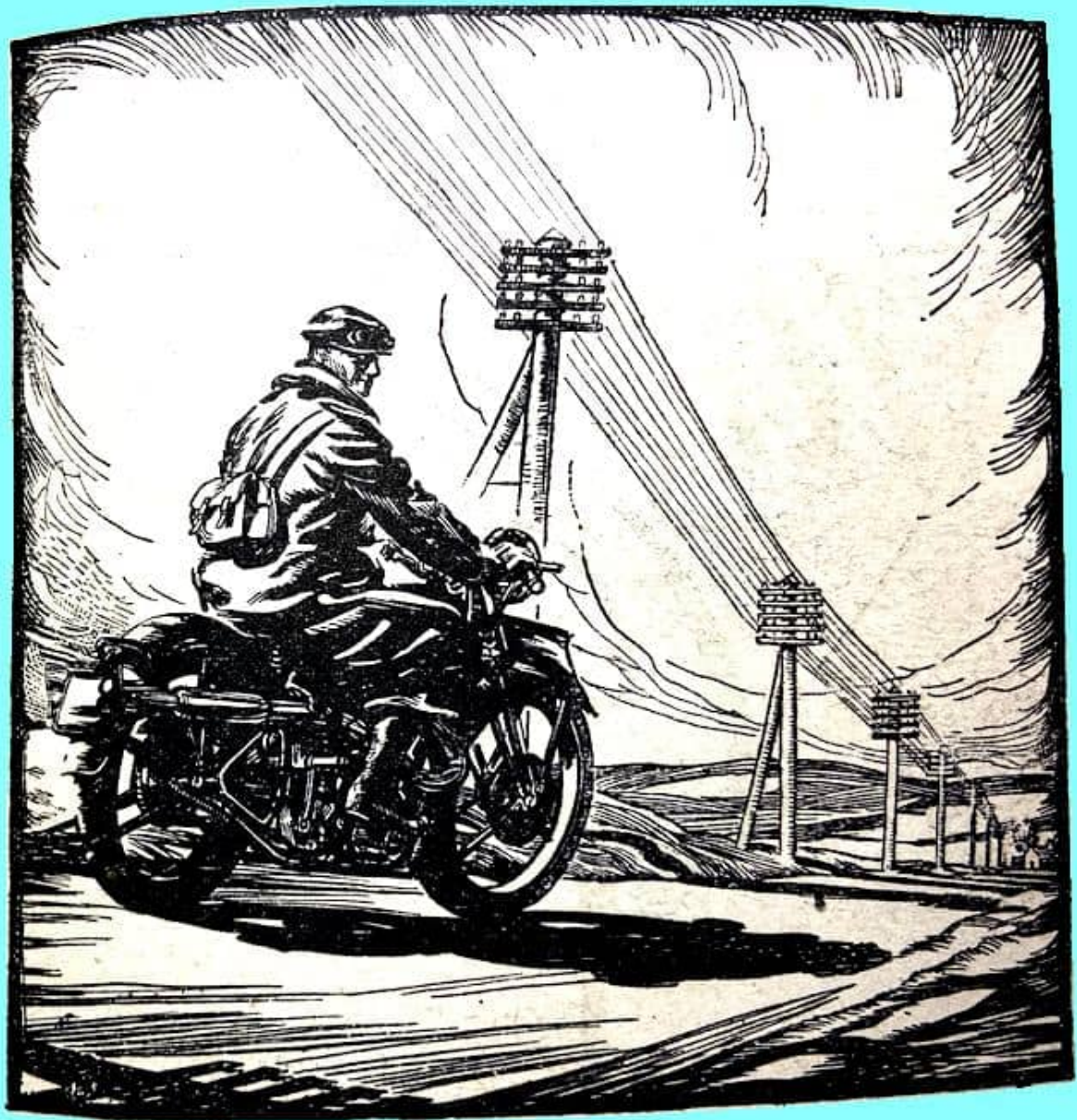








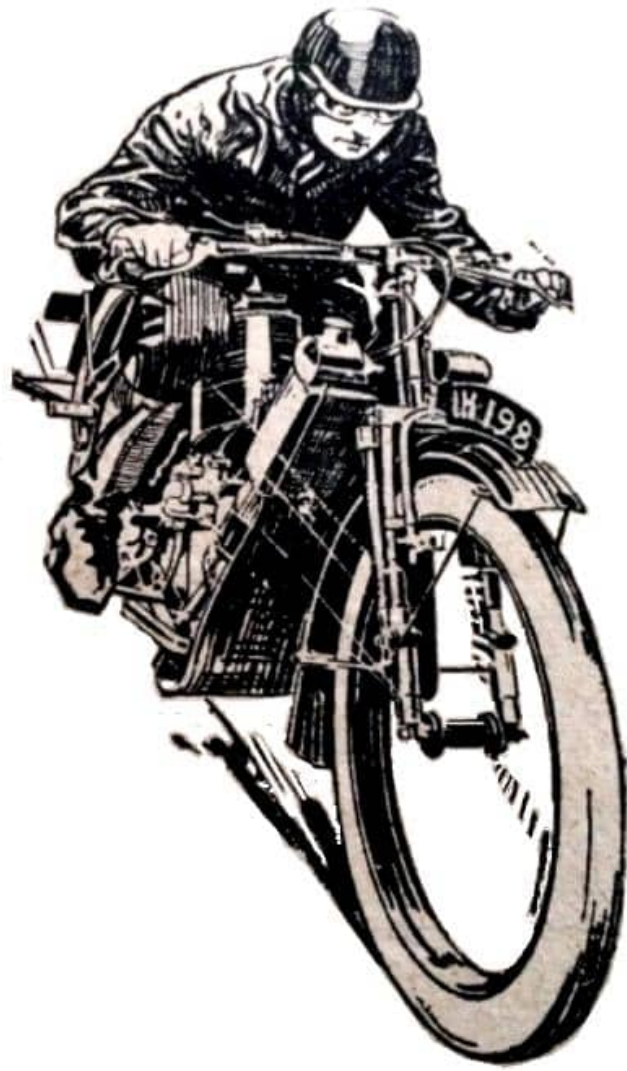


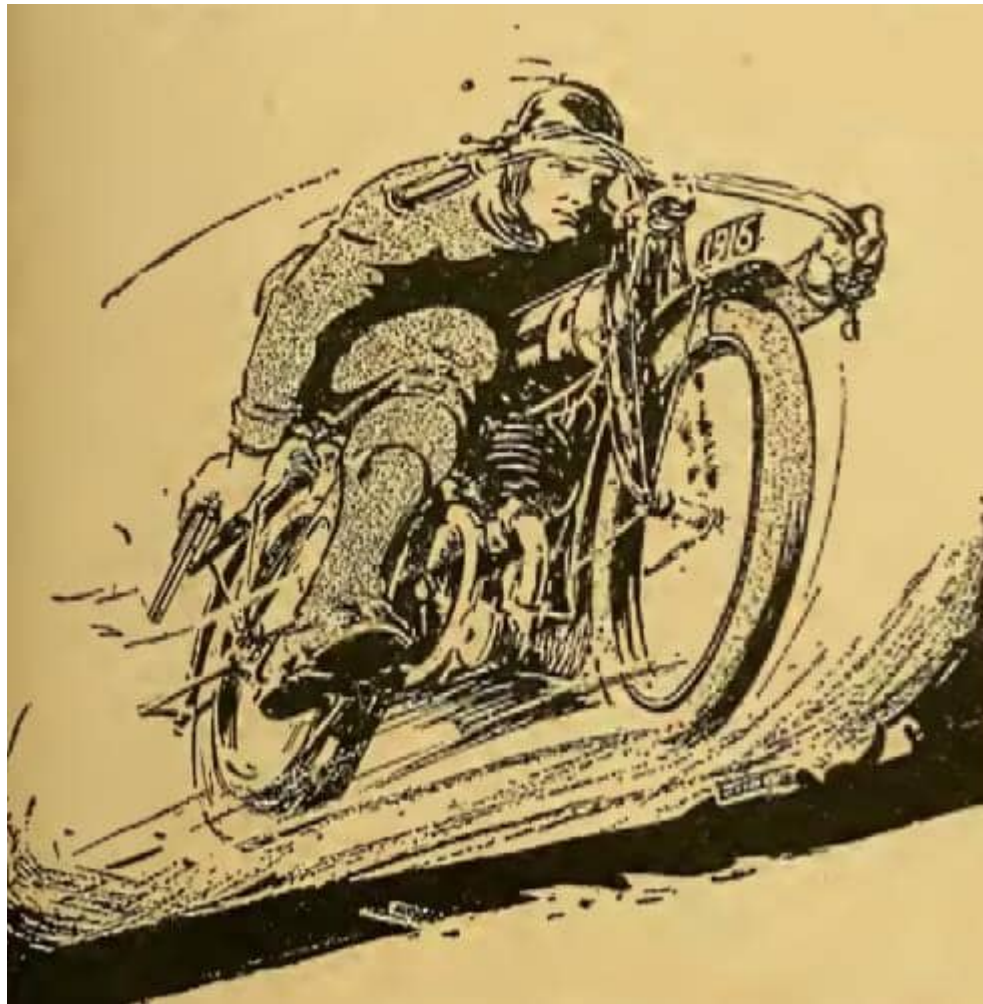


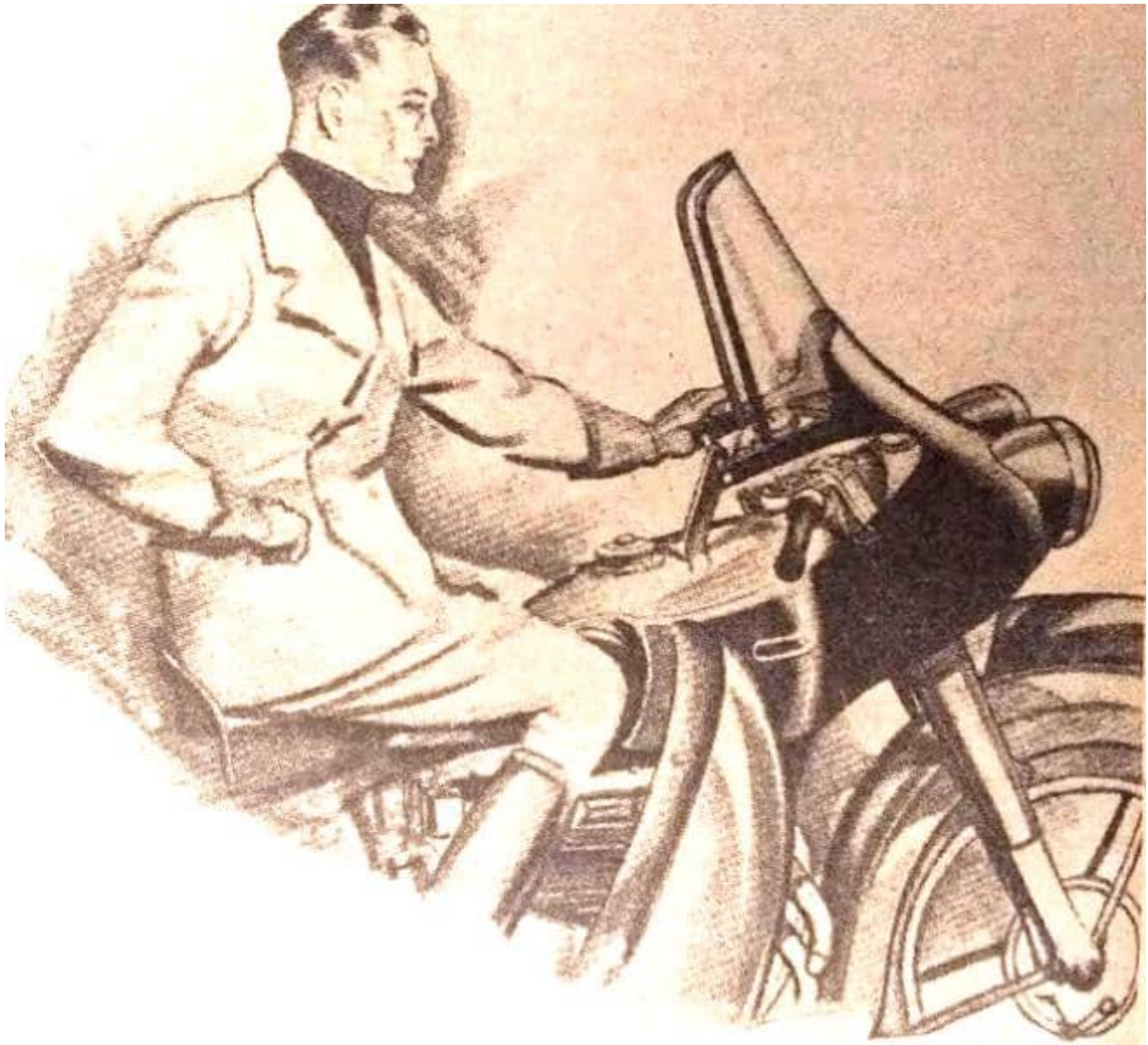


This rather fine illustration appeared in an Avon tyre manual owned from new by my neighbour's father.



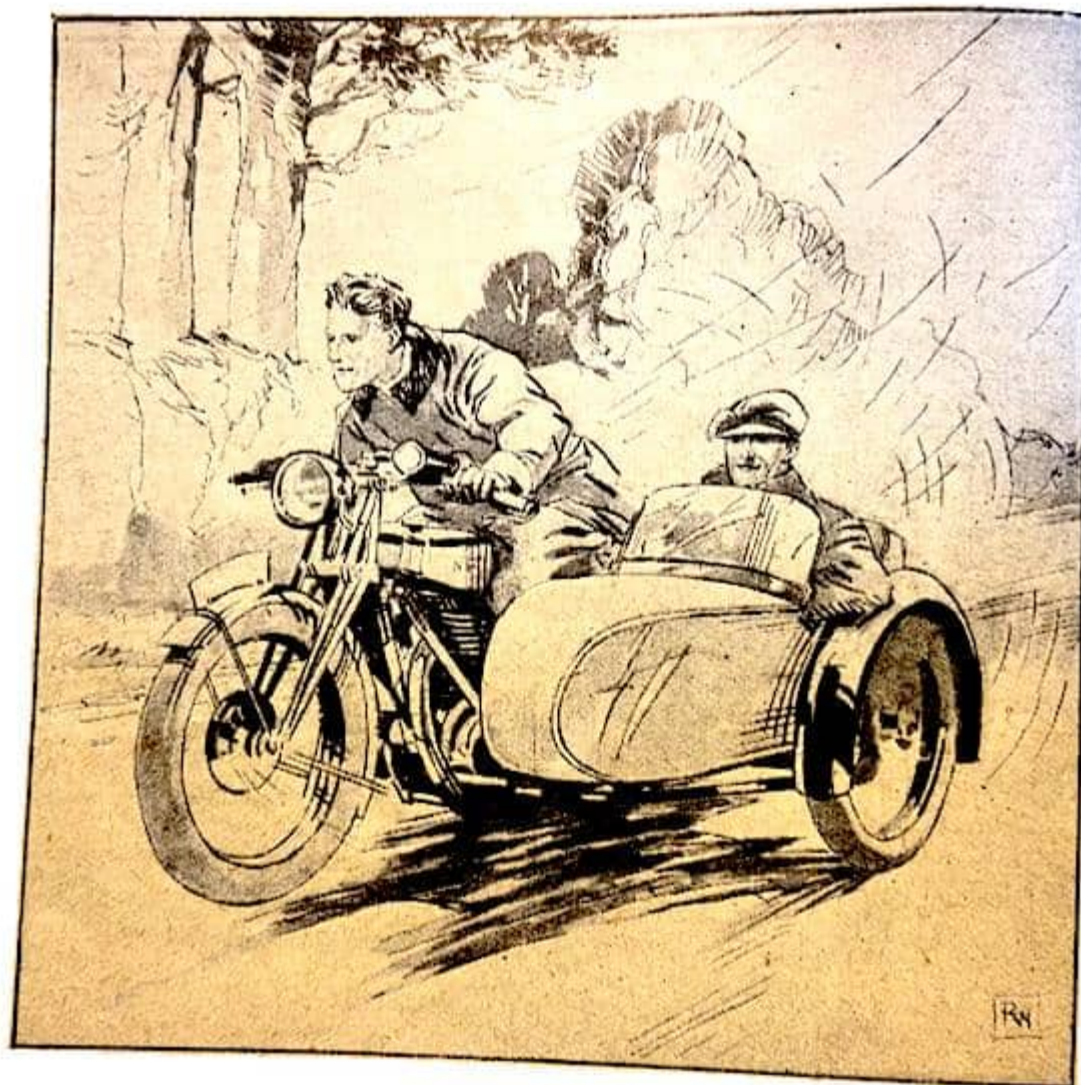




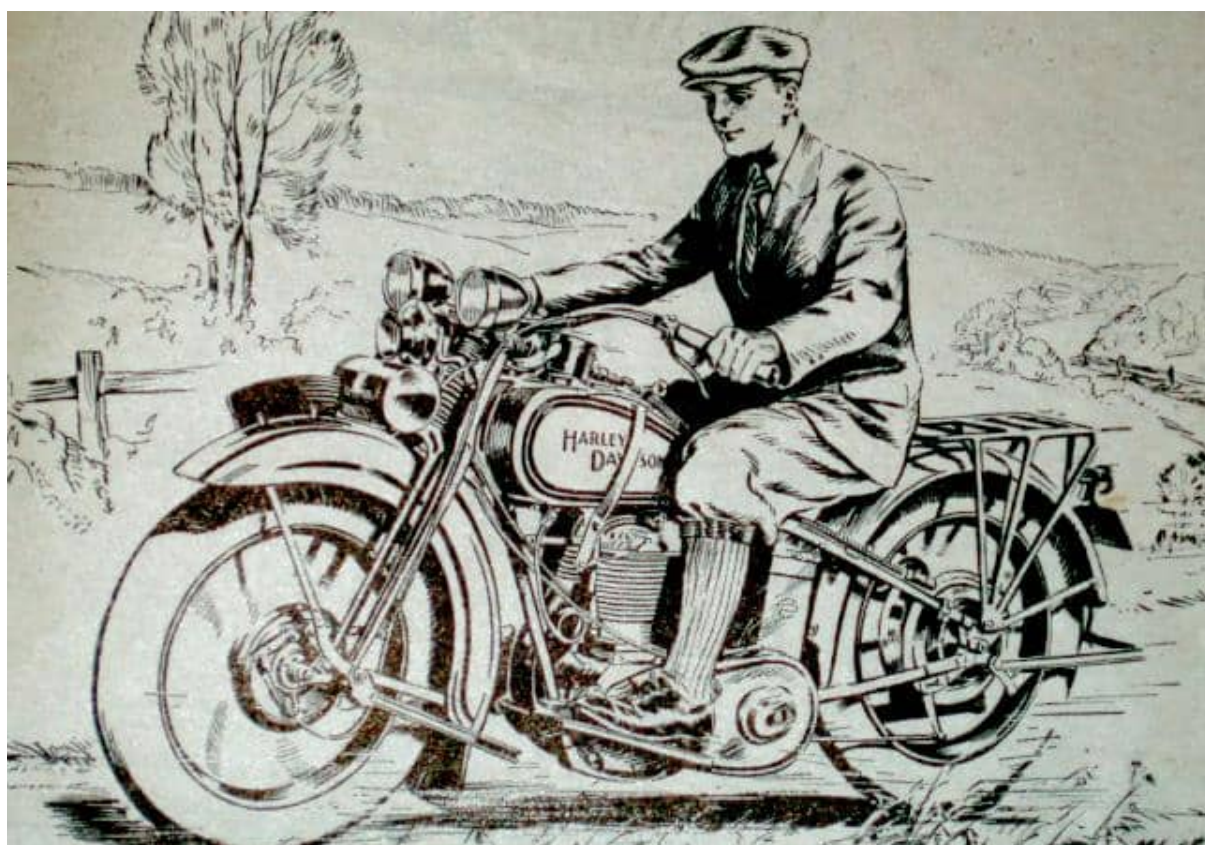
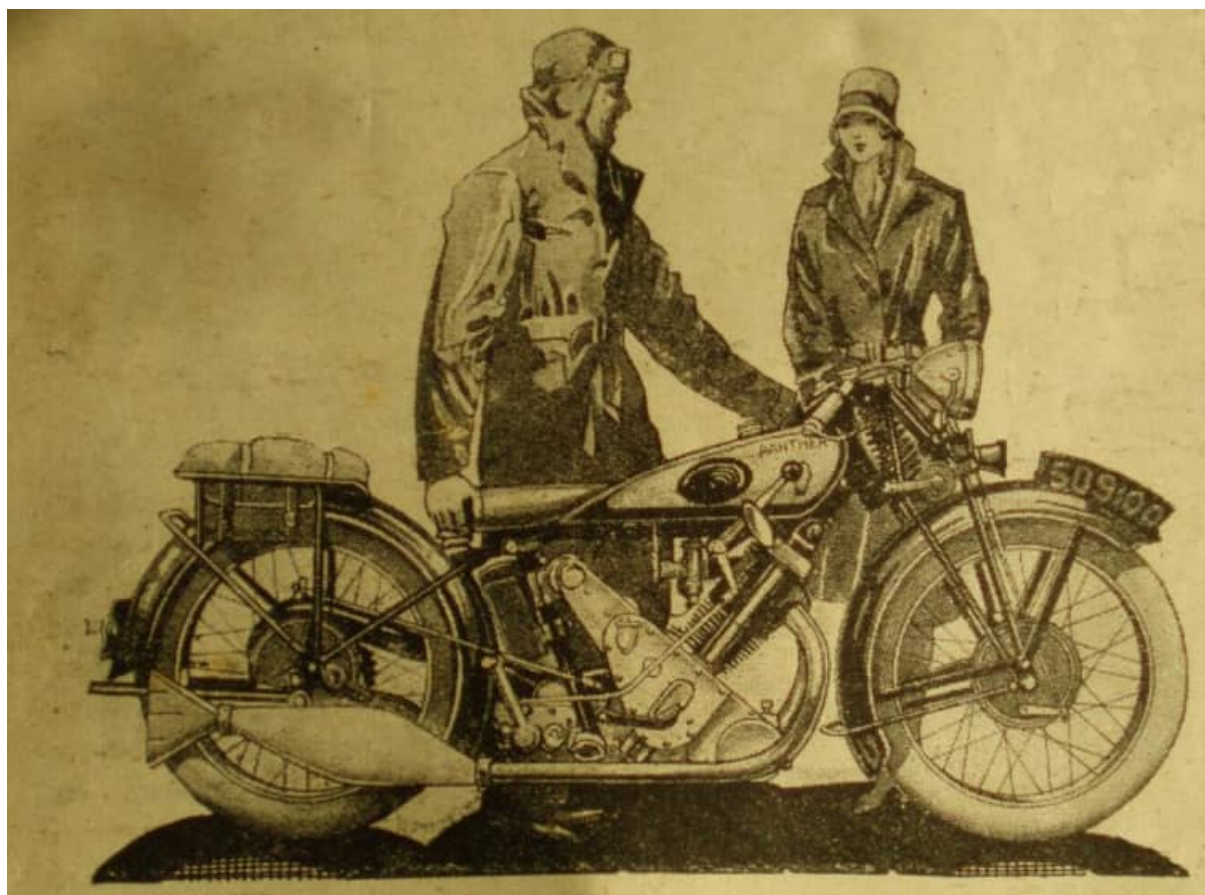


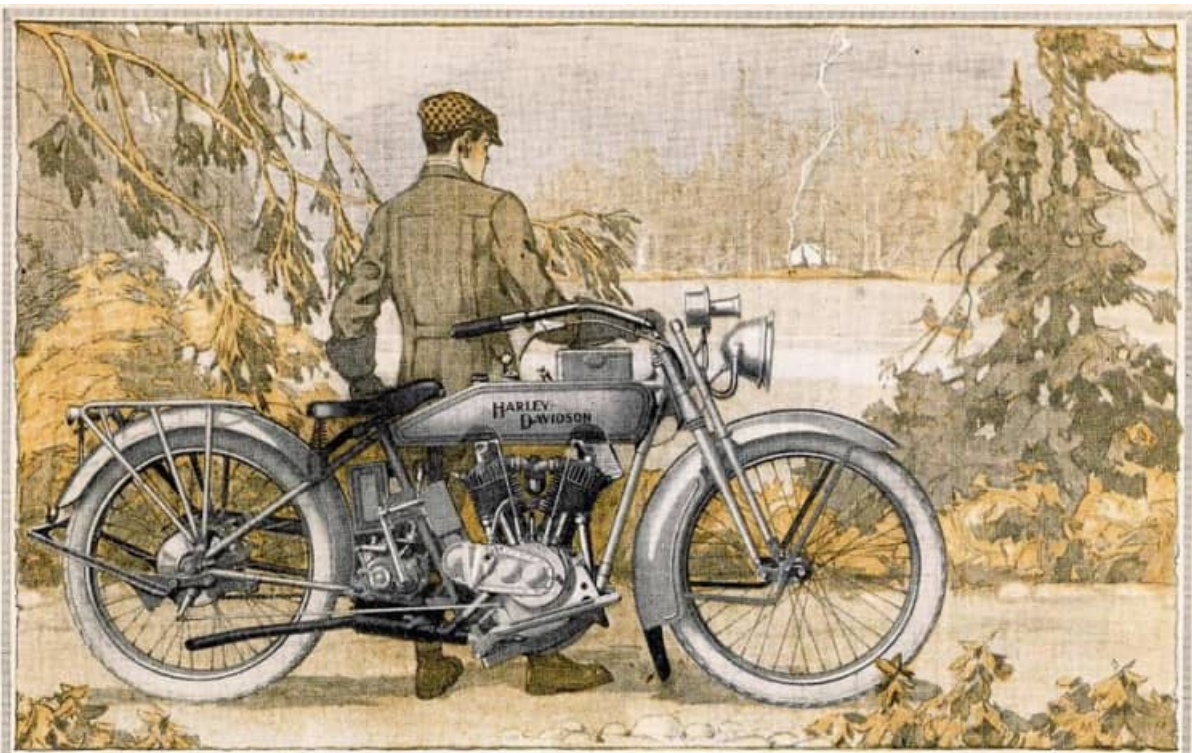
This fairing was distinctly futuristic in 1938.





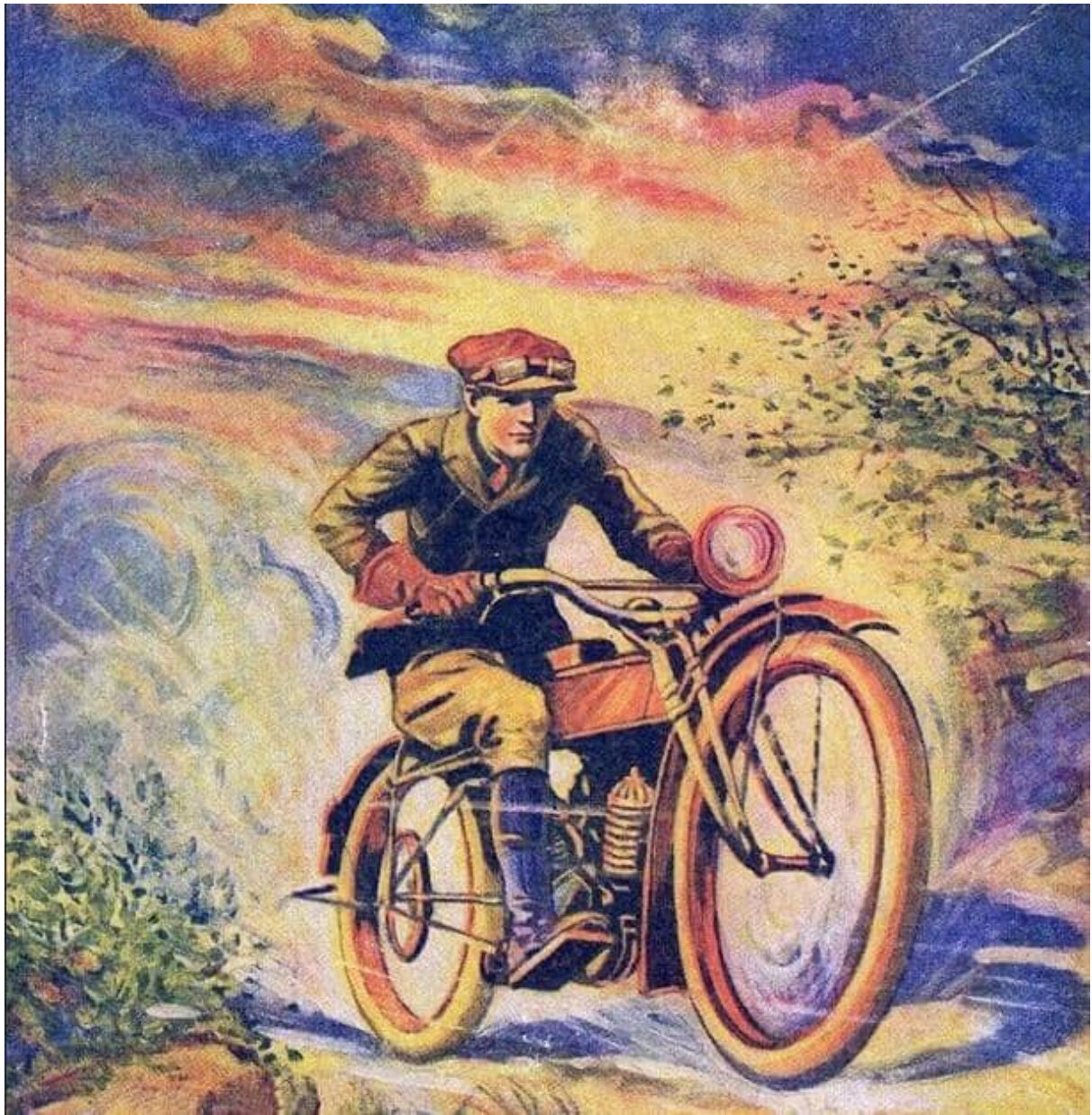






A Harley-Davidson Surprise—*The New Military Drab* "Giant 17"





This colourful illustration, which has a Stateside look to it, dates from 1910.









France et Colonies : 2 fr. 00  
Etranger : 2 fr. 50

N° 69. - Mars 1923

# LA SCIENCE ET LA VIE

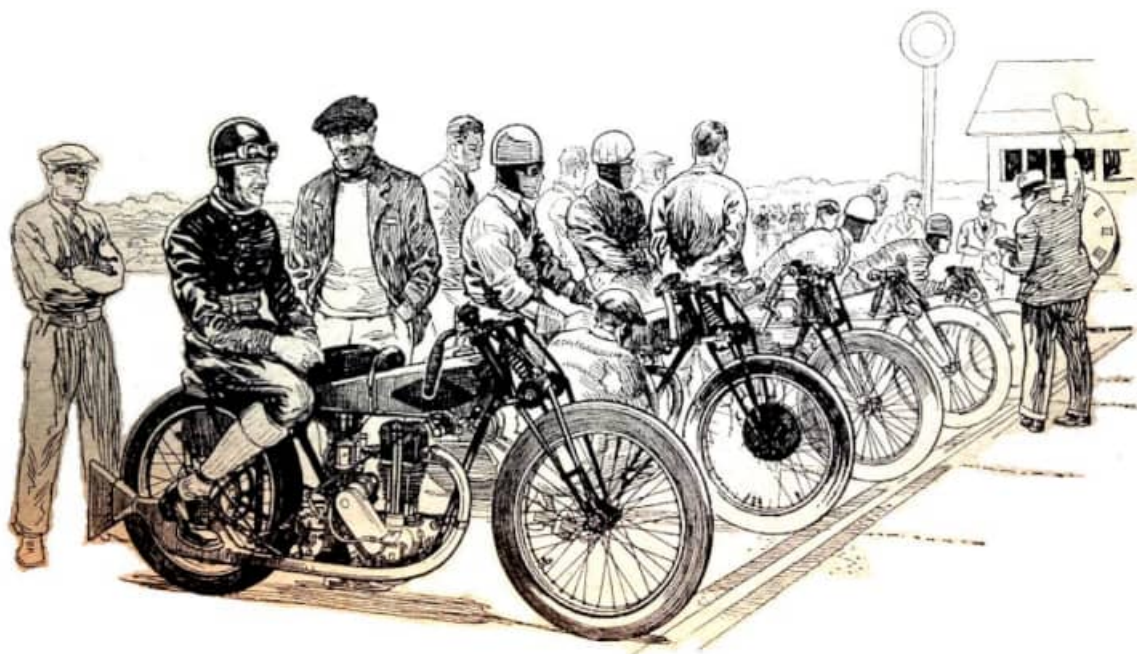








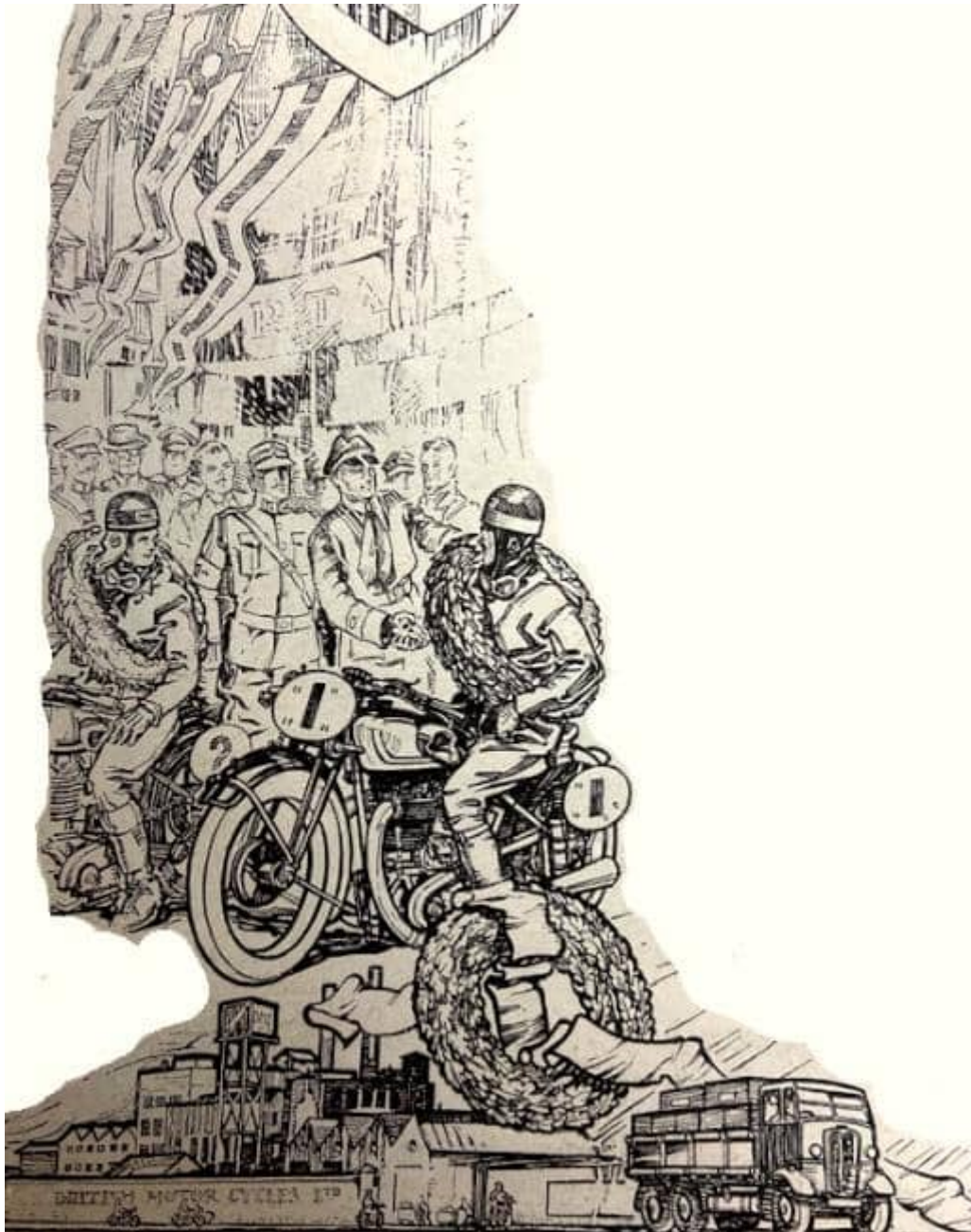




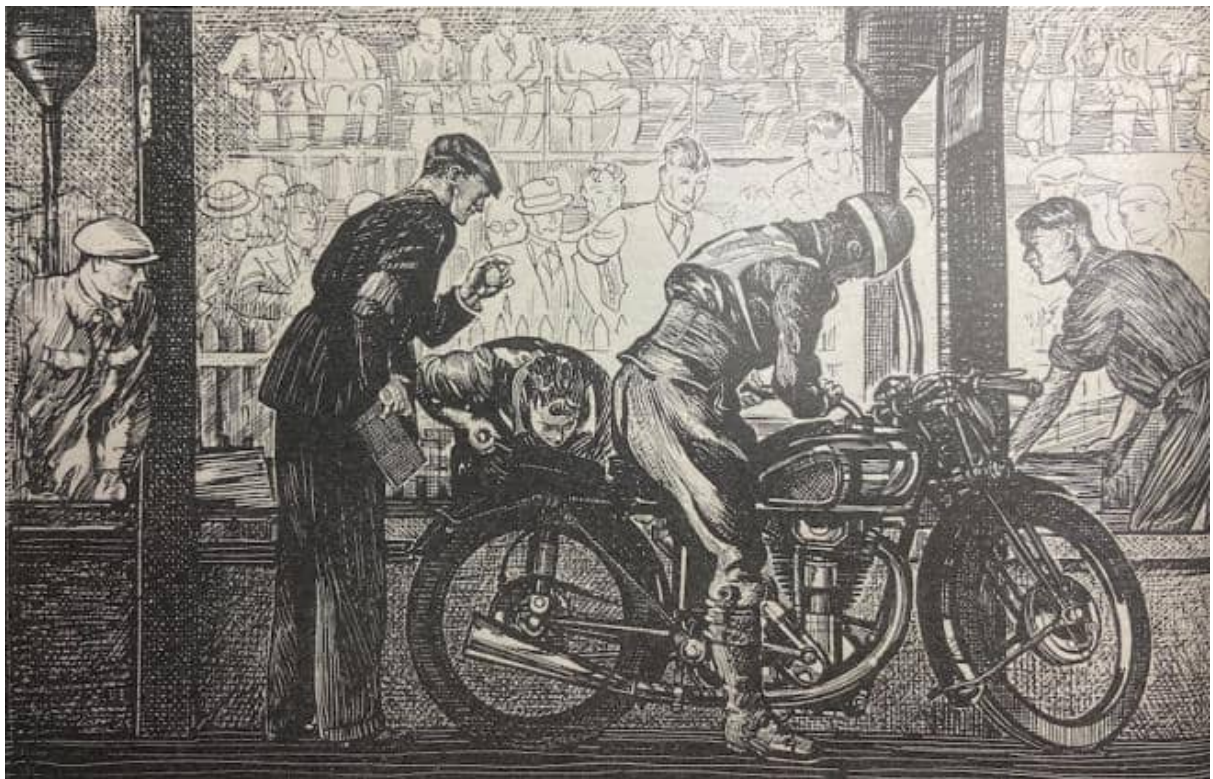




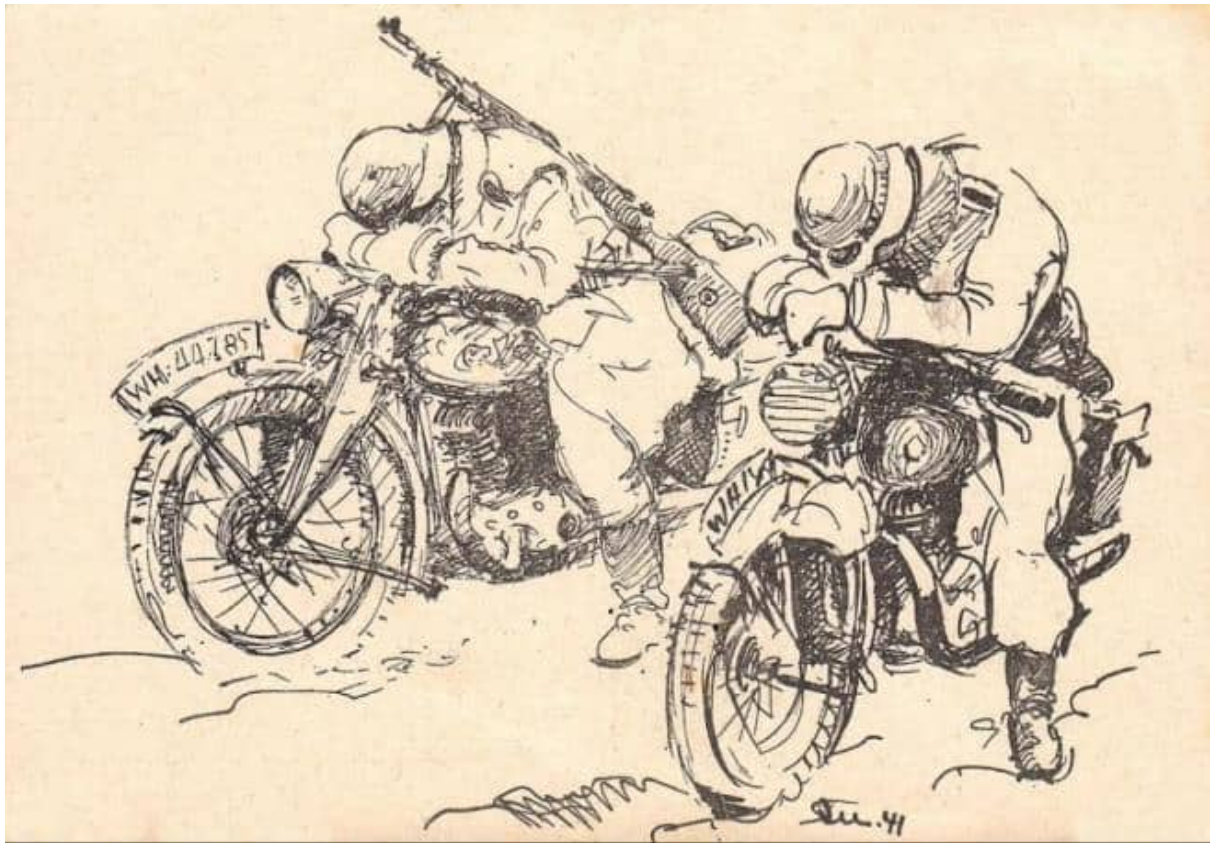




This rather striking artwork was appeared in the 'British Achievements Number' of 1937; the following two illustrations also date from 1937..







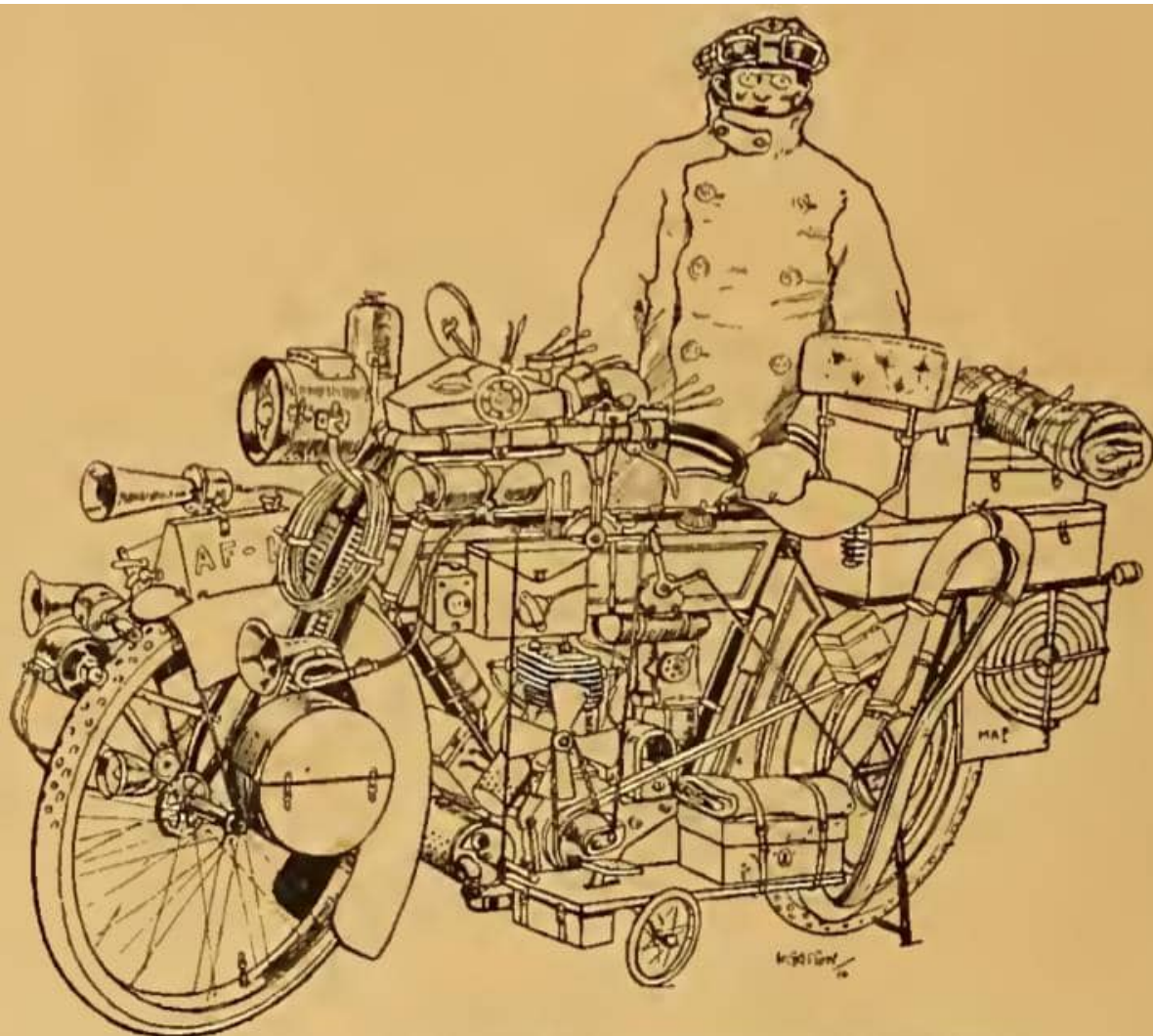
1941



This thrilling illustration of a duel during the Tourist Trophy races appeared in a 1927 book for adventurous boys.





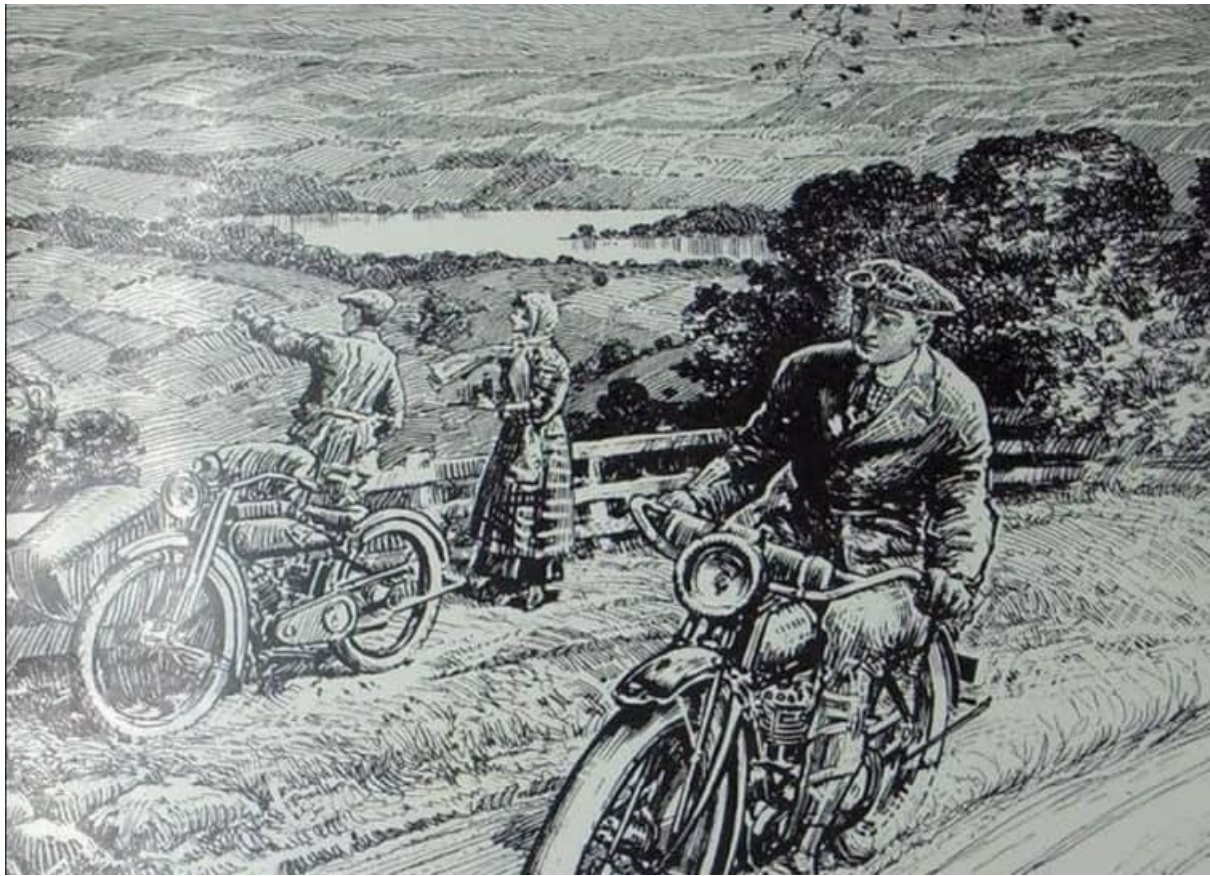


Percy, trusting soul! has taken his friends' advice and bought just a few accessories—no more—which his friends have declared they could not do without. Percy is here represented in touring trim.



A motor cycle ride by moonlight is most fascinating and enjoyable.





ONE OR TWO DISTINCTIVE COSTUMES SUGGESTED BY VARIOUS RACING GARBS  
SEEN AT BROOKLANDS.



Mephisto.

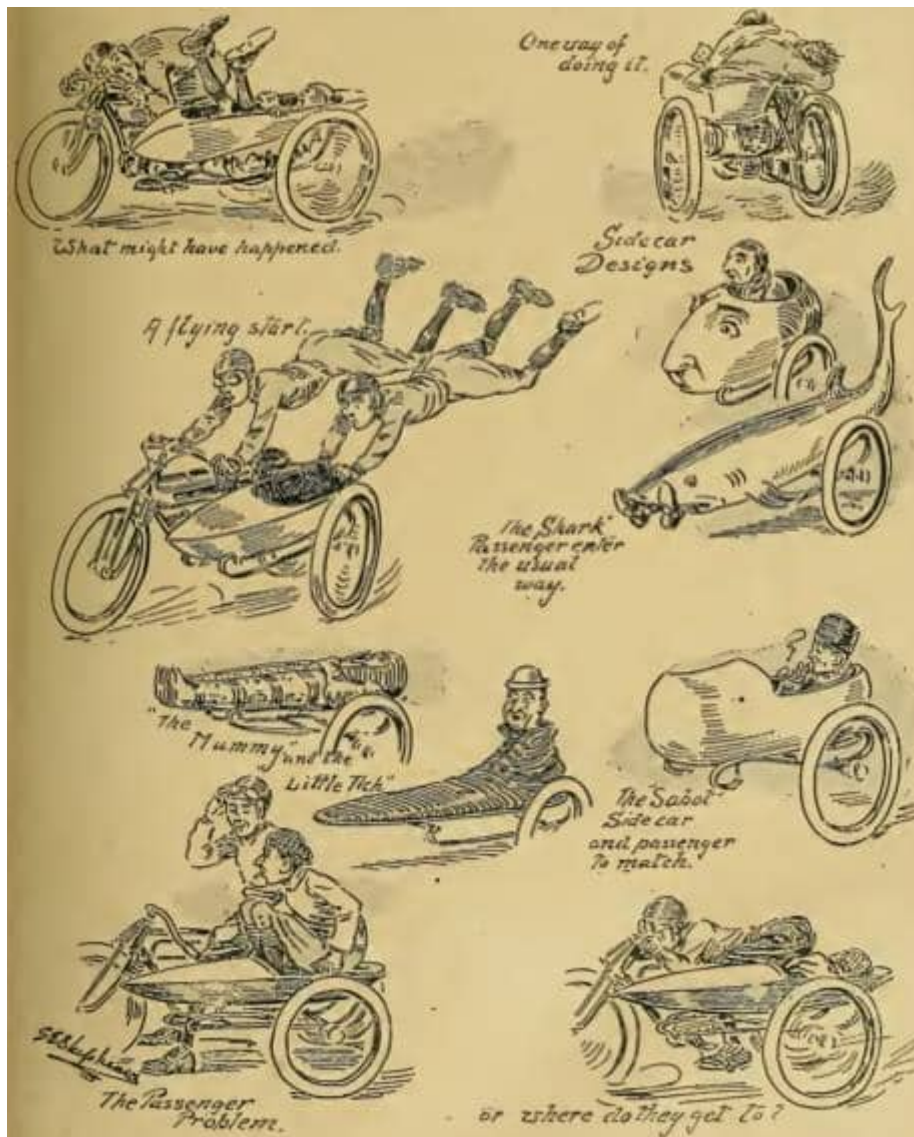
The Silent Knight.

The North Pole.

The Diver.

The Begyman.

Inspired by Brooklands circa 1908...

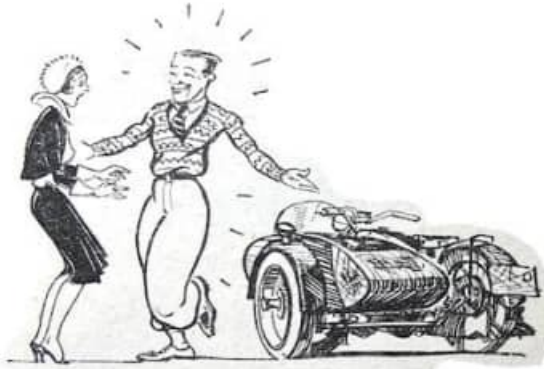


Inspired by

Brooklands circa 1913: "The racing sidecar becomes more an object of interest every day: our artist who attended the last Brooklands meeting has put on paper his impressions of existing conditions, and ideas of possible future developments in racing sidecar design."

*This strip cartoon dates from 1931 but the final pic and punchline seems somehow more 1970s.*

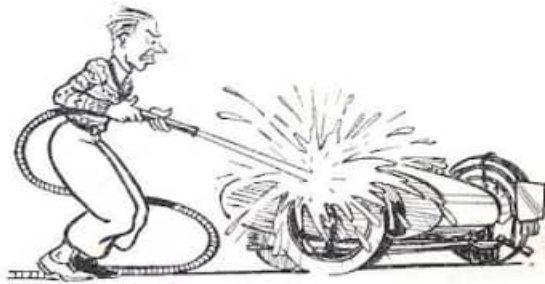




What, ride in that dirty old thing?



Not likely!



All right—



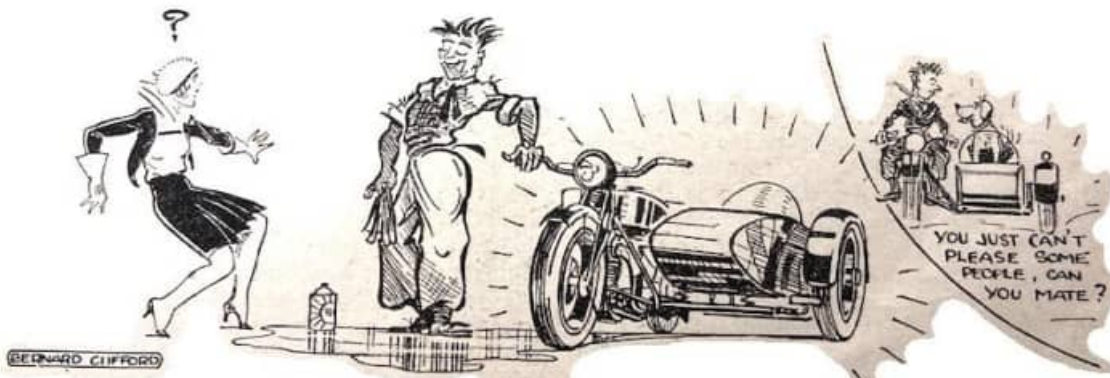
—I'll jolly well—



—make—



—her—



BEDNARD CLIFFORD

change her mind!

YOU JUST CAN'T PLEASE SOME PEOPLE, CAN YOU MATE?





“While riding along Farringdon Road the other afternoon we noticed that the proprietor of one of the stalls there had added motor cycle accessories to his stock-in-trade. A sign of the times!”

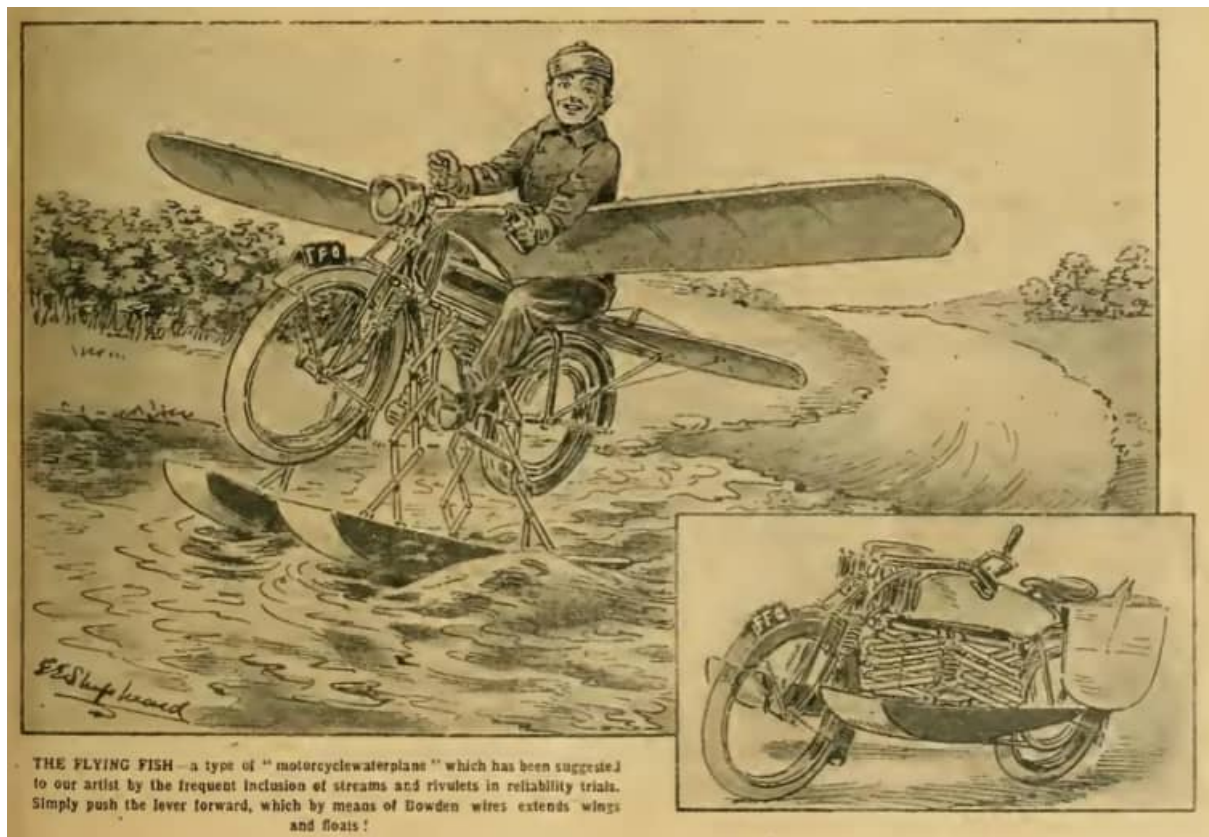


**PLEASURES OF THE PILLION SEAT.**

"Oh, Algy dear, here comes a horrid motor ; do be careful, darling, I'm frightfully nervous, and if you upset me I shall never forgive you."

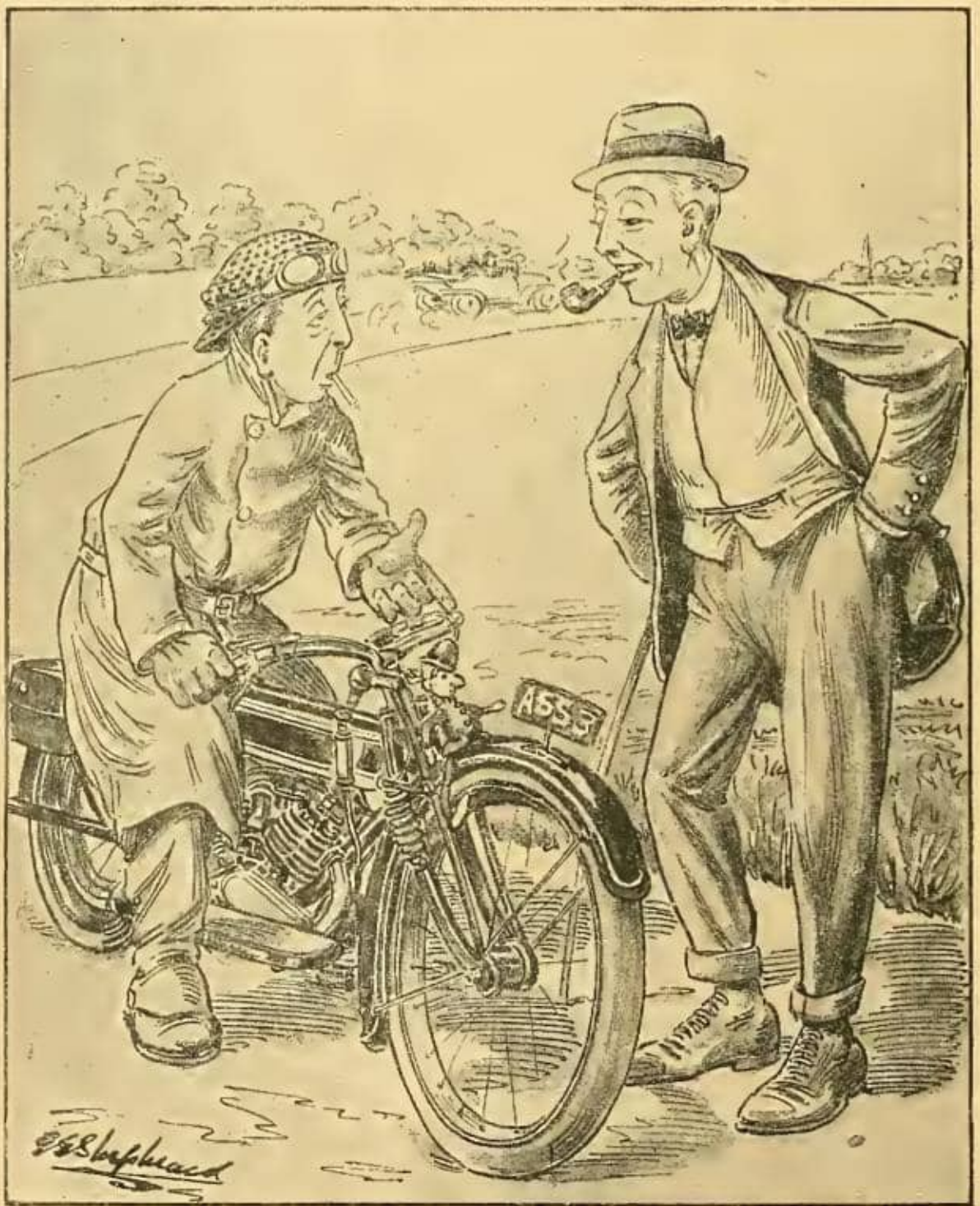
From the Christmas 1911 edition of the Blue 'Un.





Trials were getting tougher by the year; this whimsy dates from 1913.

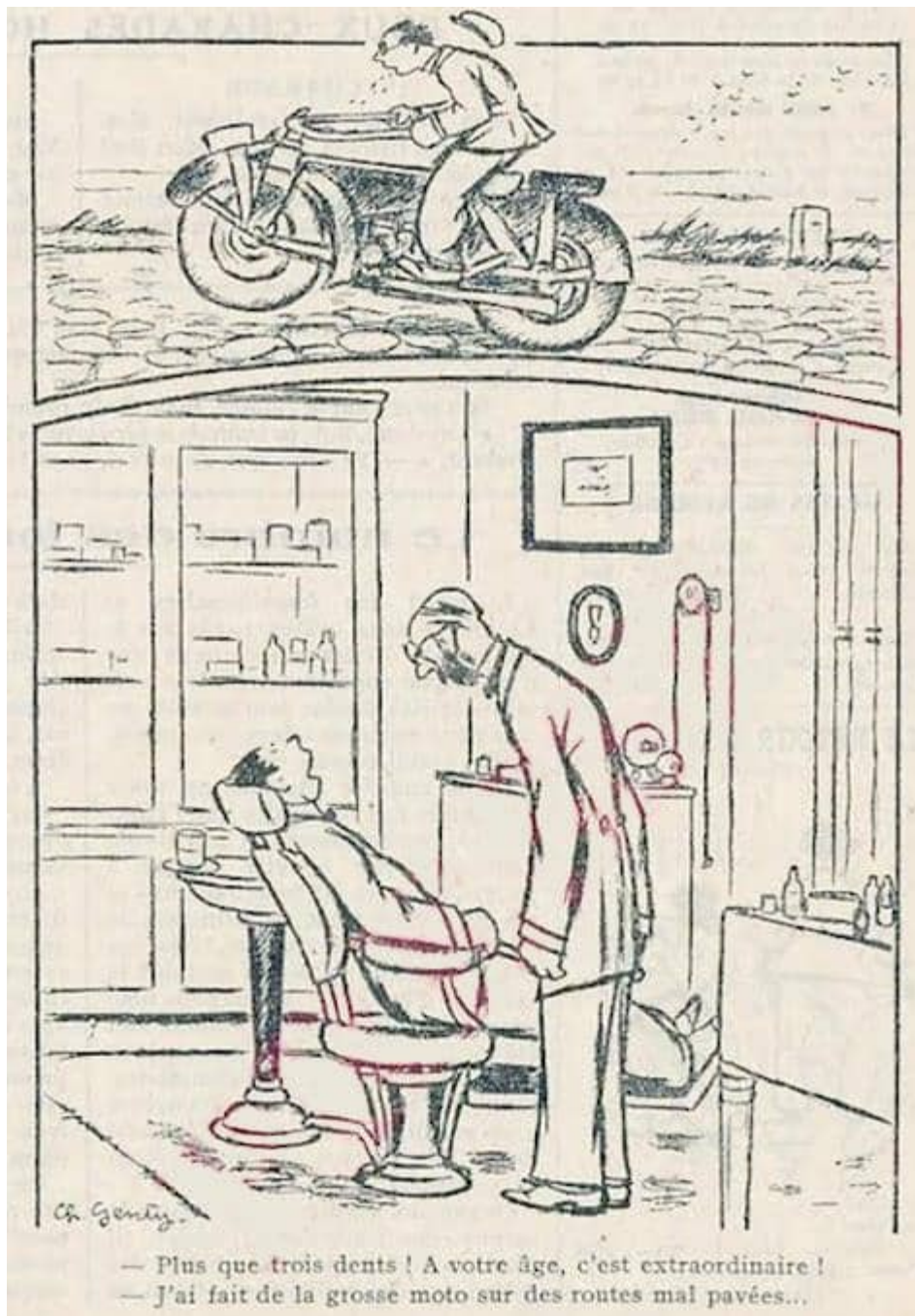




A DOUBTFUL COMPLIMENT.

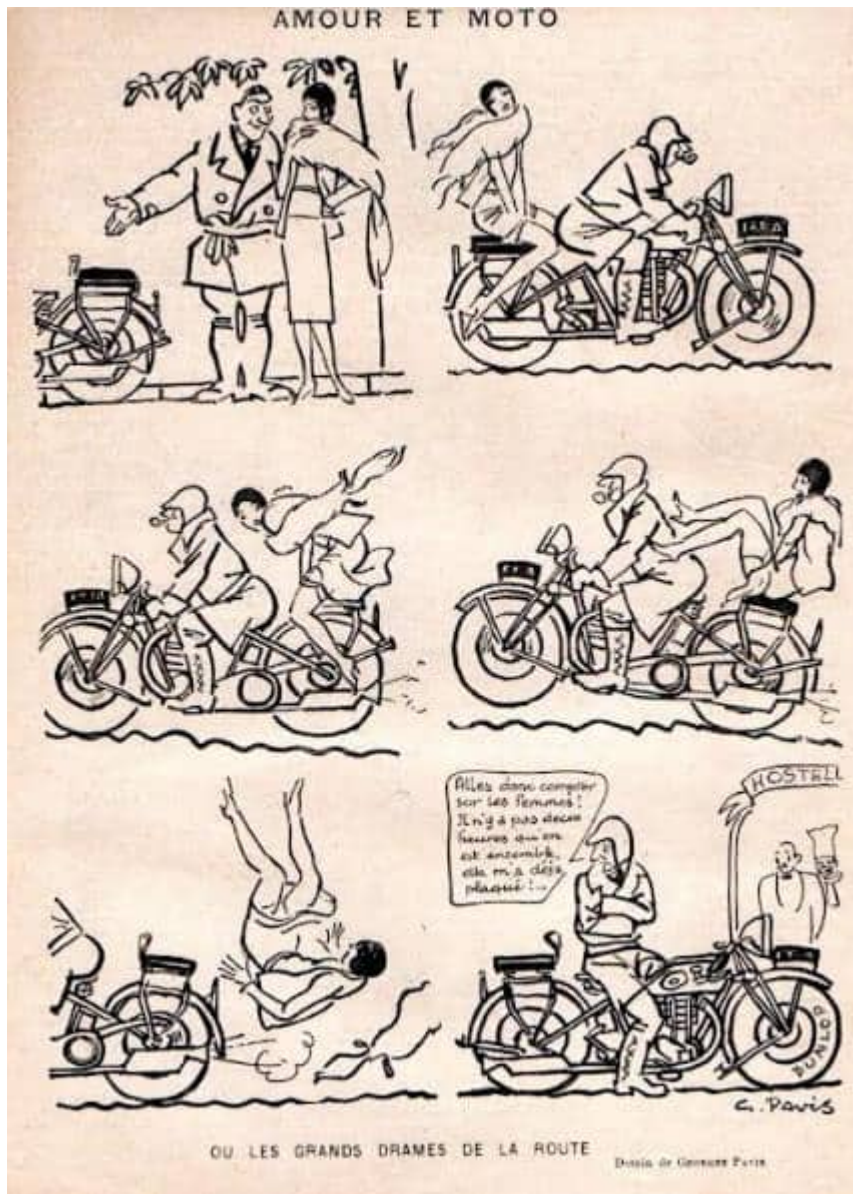
"Hello! old chap, got a new mount?" "Yes, dear boy, two-cylinder, three-speed, magneto, spring forks——" "And fool proof, I presume?"

From 1914, and rather charming...



Pavee can be rough...the caption on this one translates as: "Only three teeth left! At your age, that's extraordinary!" "I rode a big motor cycle on badly surfaced roads..."





French humour, circa

1930: "You can't trust women! It's not two hours since we've been together and she's already dumped me!"





From a French calendar:

“For a good ‘workout’. A motorcycle is a bicycle that has been fitted with an engine to make a lot of noise and keep it running. In this case it can be pushed along laboriously, making the sport all the more enjoyable.”

*Here’s a charming trio of postcards from La Belle France. The caption they each carry tells the story: “We often need someone smaller than ourselves”.*



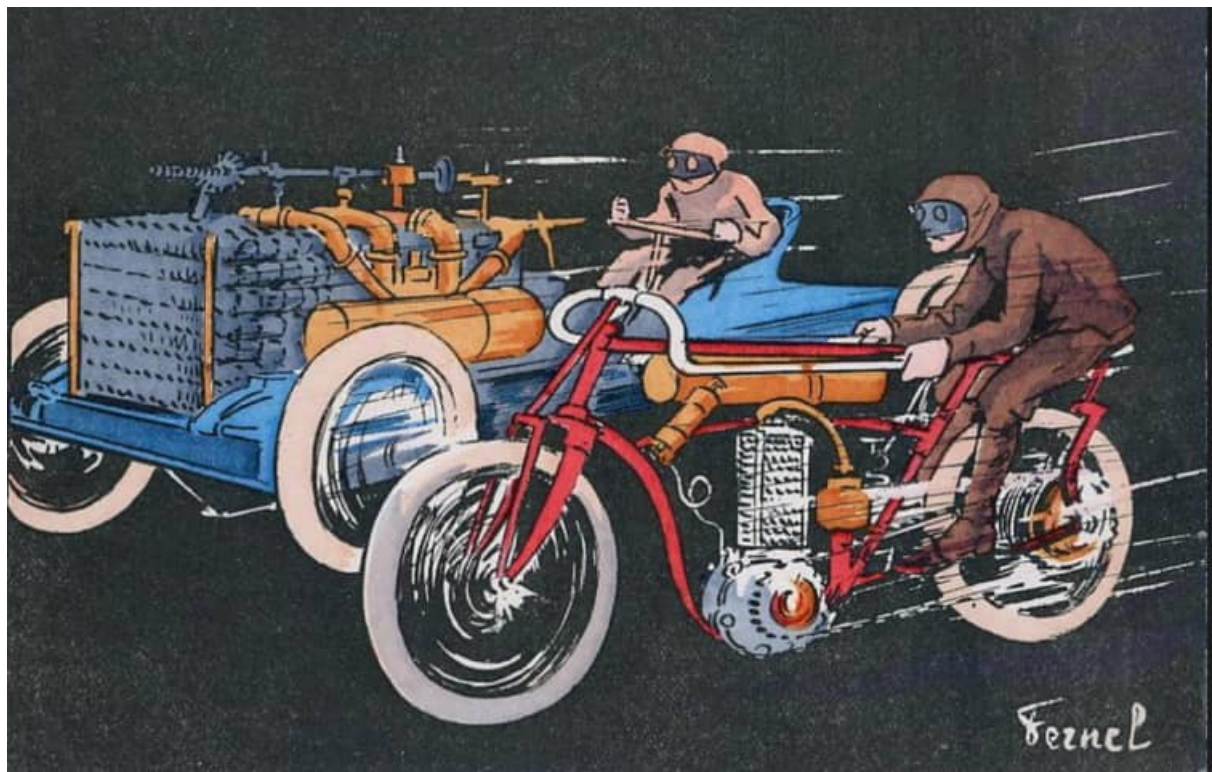
3 — On a souvent besoin d'un plus petit que soi.



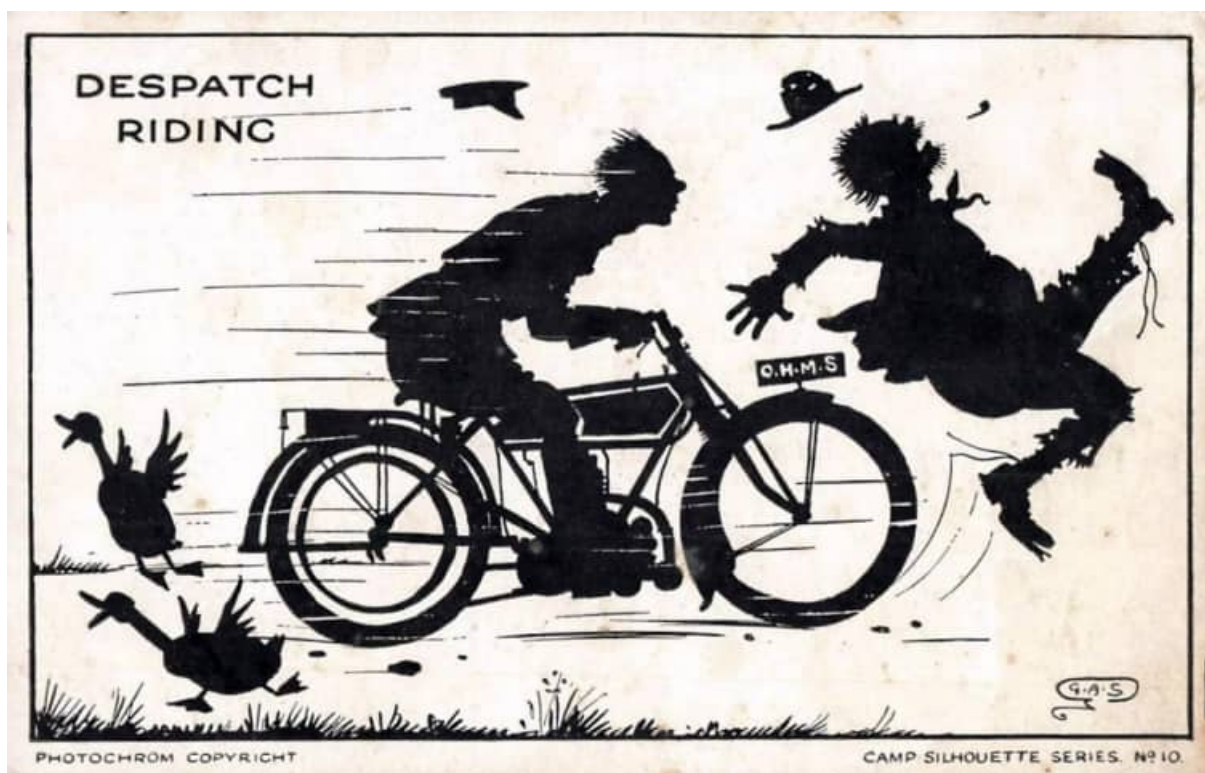




The sentiment on this card, depicting a French DR and his best girl, will strike a chord with many of us whose first romance was sparked by our first motor cycle: “And to see this gaze that bewitched me sooner, I’ll burn along the road.”

















This one (and the illustration that follows it) are by Georges Mouton who was a highly regarded French illustrator. They appear here courtesy of my chum Francois. Merci, mon ami.



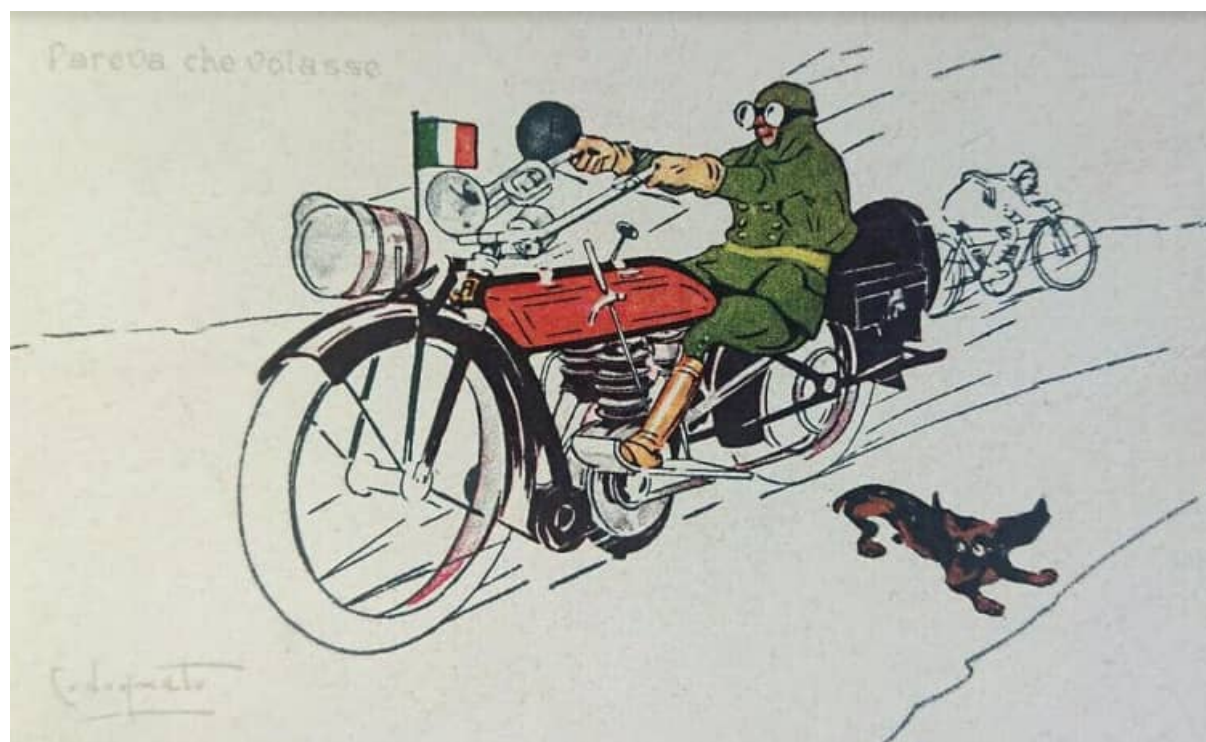


Judging by the next two images, bulls were a recurring nightmare for French motorists...



*The Italians have a style all their own...*









"DINGED IF THIS AIN'T THE  
FIRST TIME I EVER KNEW  
THEM THINGS HAD COLTS!"

**2 Steuer-PS.  
6½ PS. effektiv  
Einzyylinder-  
Hochleistungsmotor**

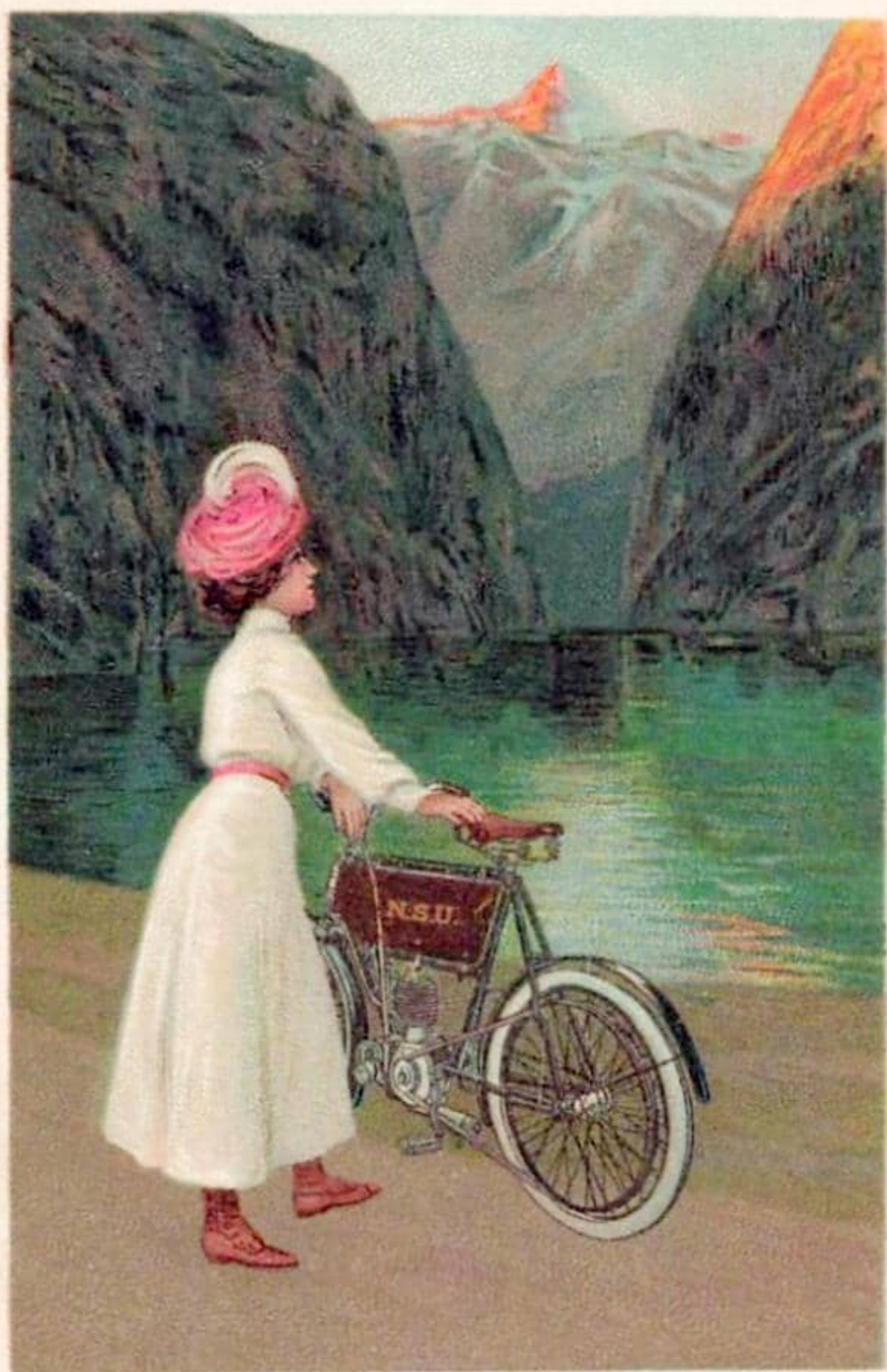


[www.motorraeder-aus-leipzig.de](http://www.motorraeder-aus-leipzig.de)

**HIEKEL**  
**MASCHINENFABRIK**  
**LEIPZIG/ THEKLA**







ACT GEL. & KUNSTDRUCK. NIEDERSTADT 2. 1912/13

Königsee.





**SOUVENIR DU SALON DU CYCLE.**

**PEDALES, MOYEUX, FREINS.**

**CHAINES POUR CYCLES & AUTOS**

**BRAMPTON BROTHERS, BIRMINGHAM. CALAIS.**



La  
Moto

MEER



*ne connaît pas la panne*

F. DESERT & P. DE FONT-REULX  
CONSTRUCTEURS  
100 Avenue de Neuilly — Neuilly-sur-Seine  
Téléphone : Neuilly 779

*Quatre fois  
Champion de France*





# LA MOTOSACOCHE

BREVETÉE EN TOUS PAYS

H. & A. DUFAUX & C<sup>IE</sup>

GENÈVE (ACACIAS)



# Motorräder

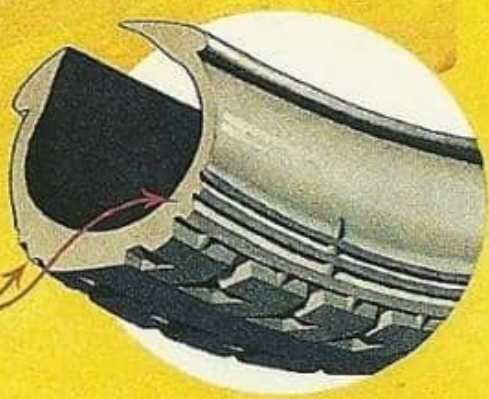


Fahrzeugfabrik:  
**Hans Hecker. Nürnberg**





*Grâce à ses  
nervures latérales*



**le nouveau  
pneu moto Michelin  
est  
le plus antidérapant**



que diable n'avait-il  
une Autowatt

**MAGNĒTO AUTOWATT**

VENTE EN GROS Etablissements AUTOWATT Société Anonyme au CAPITAL de 2.000.000 de Francs  
58, ROUTE D'ORLÉANS - MONTROUGE Série TELEPHONE Saxe 88.39  
ADRESSE TÉLÉGRAPHIQUE : AUTOWATT - MONTROUGE MONTROUGE 206

LA FROUPE PUBLIETTE 40 R. du CHATEAU D'EAU 75. NORD. 72.34

de la belle mécanique!

**CYCLES FAVOR MOTOS**

Jelinger

LES CYCLES FAVOR 10, rue de la République, 75001 PARIS

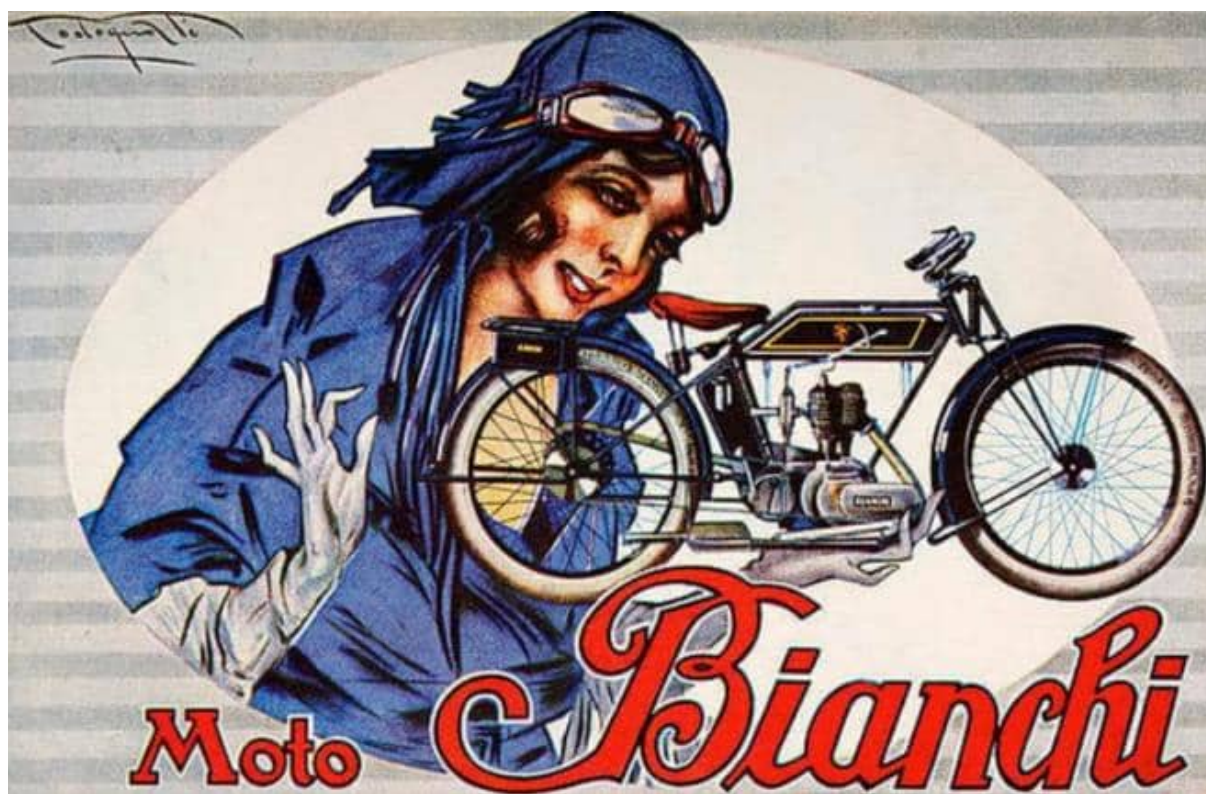
TOUS LES CHAMPIONS Y PASSENT...



CYCLES MOTOS  
**LABOR**





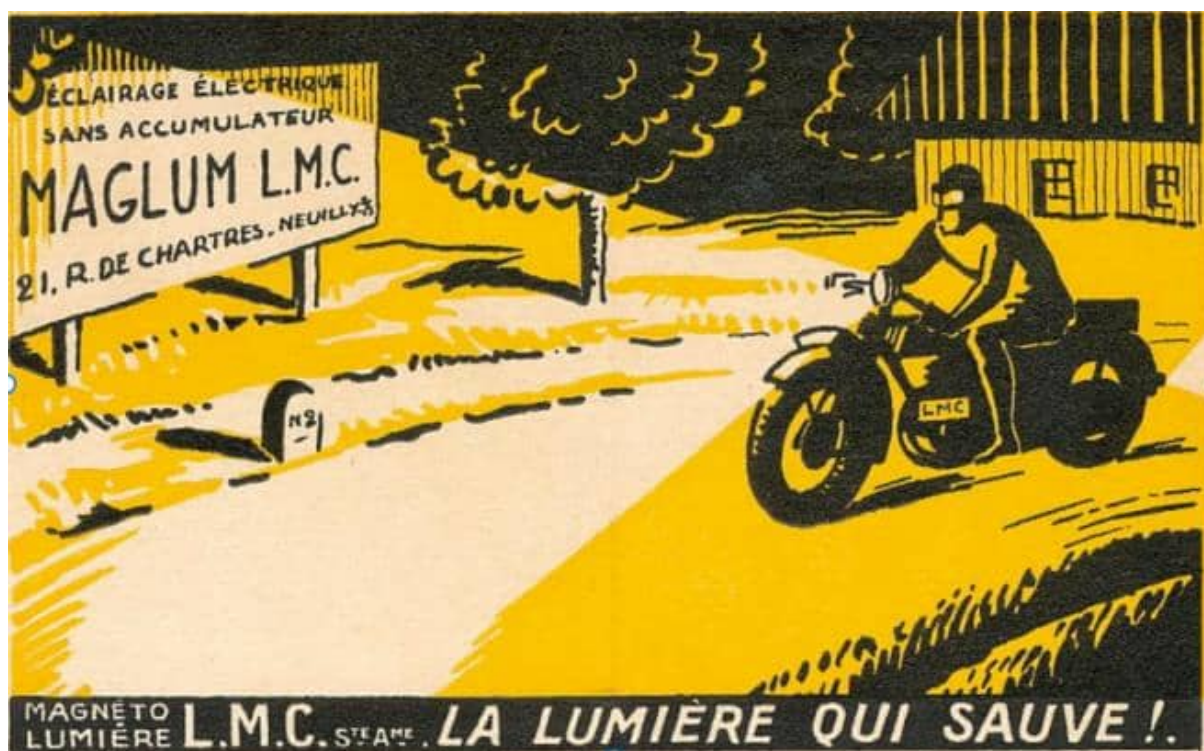




JEAN  
PRUNIERE  
27

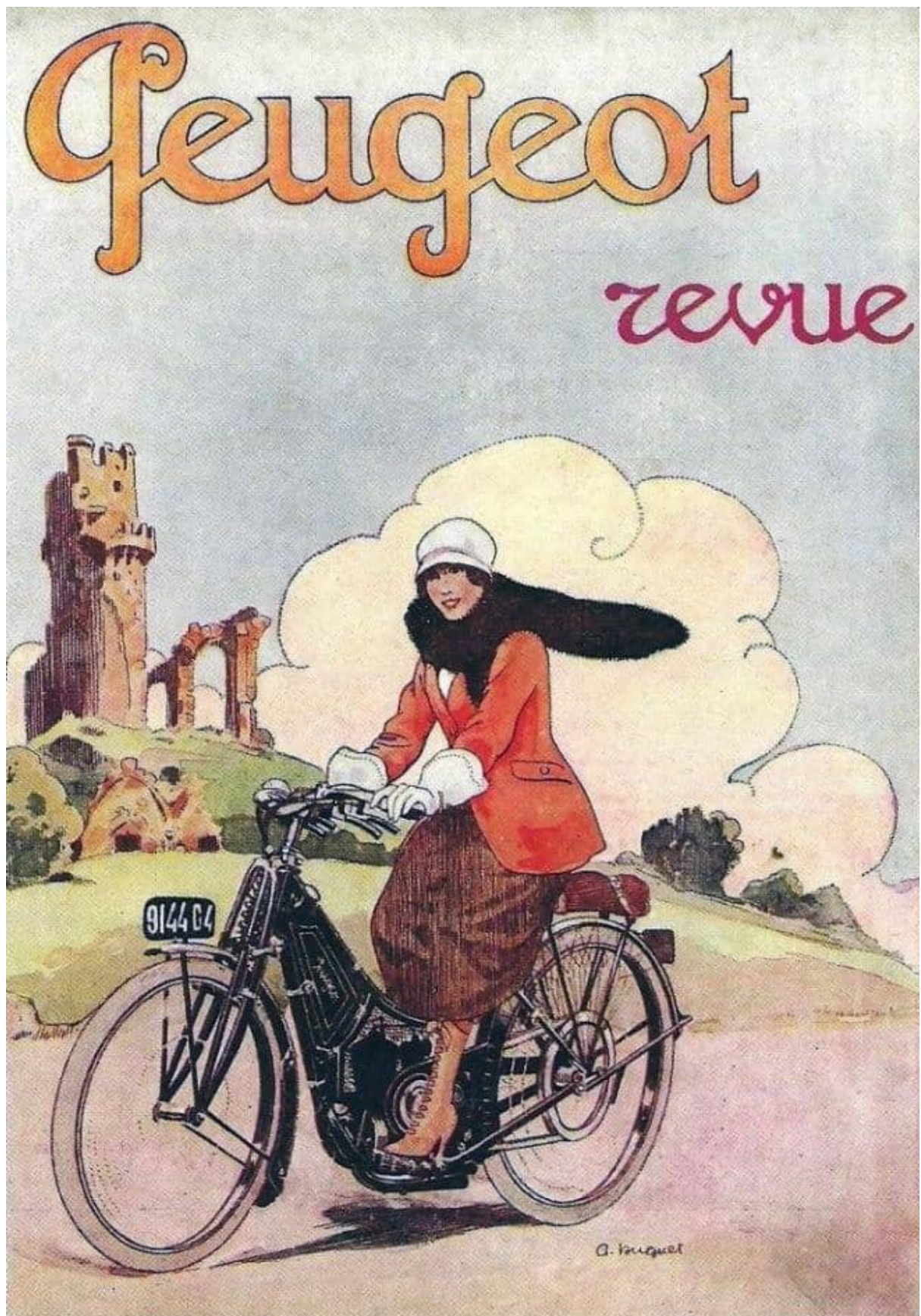


**FAVOR**  
**CYCLES & MOTOS** de grand luxe



MAGNETO LUMIÈRE L.M.C. STEAM. LA LUMIÈRE QUI SAUVE !.

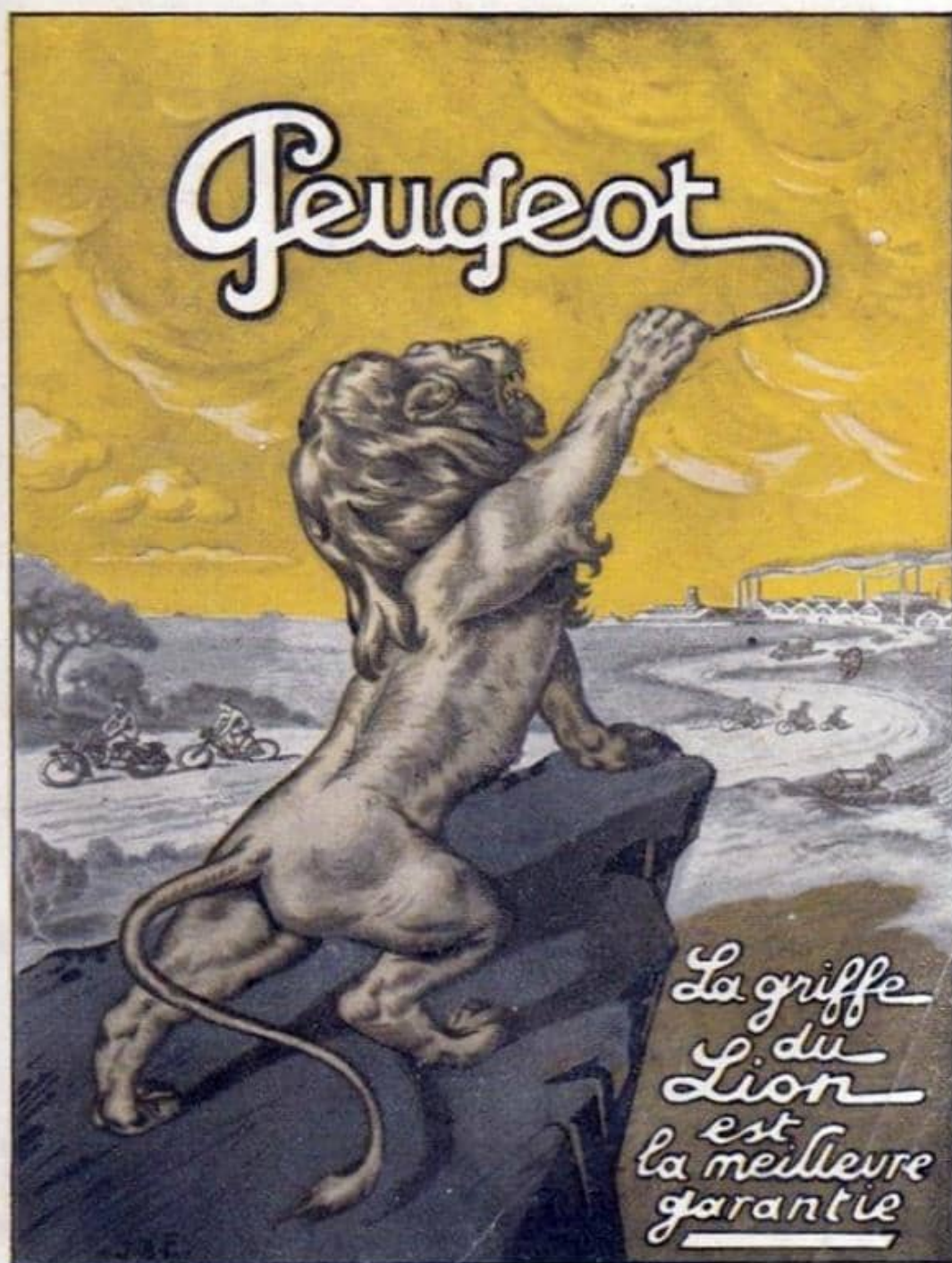




1910



Cycles - Motos



AGENT :

1913



1928





1946









# Schüttorf



## MOTORRÄDER

SCHÜTTORF-ACTIENGESellschaft • CHEMNITZ i. SA.



# ARIEL



*The* MODERN MOTOR  
CYCLE

ARIEL WORKS LIMITED. SELLY OAK. BIRMINGHAM.





# CRIFFON



- COURBEVOIE -

- SEINE -

Thor



**MOTO GUZZI HISPANIA**



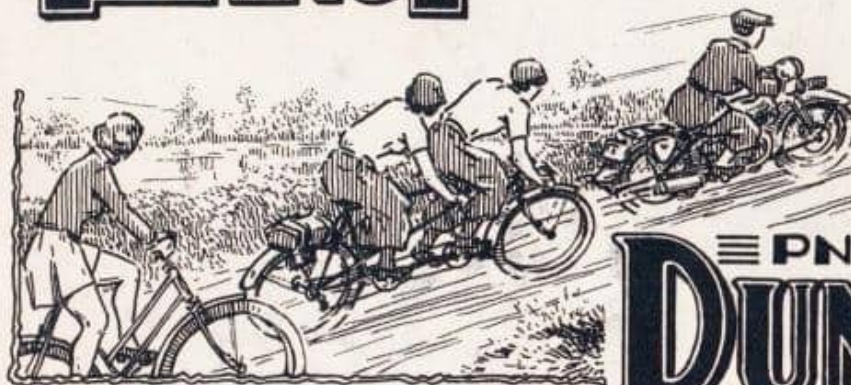
**SERVICIO**

The Leading Pair!



TRIPLE SHELL OIL and GOLDEN SHELL OIL

CYCLES-MOTOS  
**TERROT**



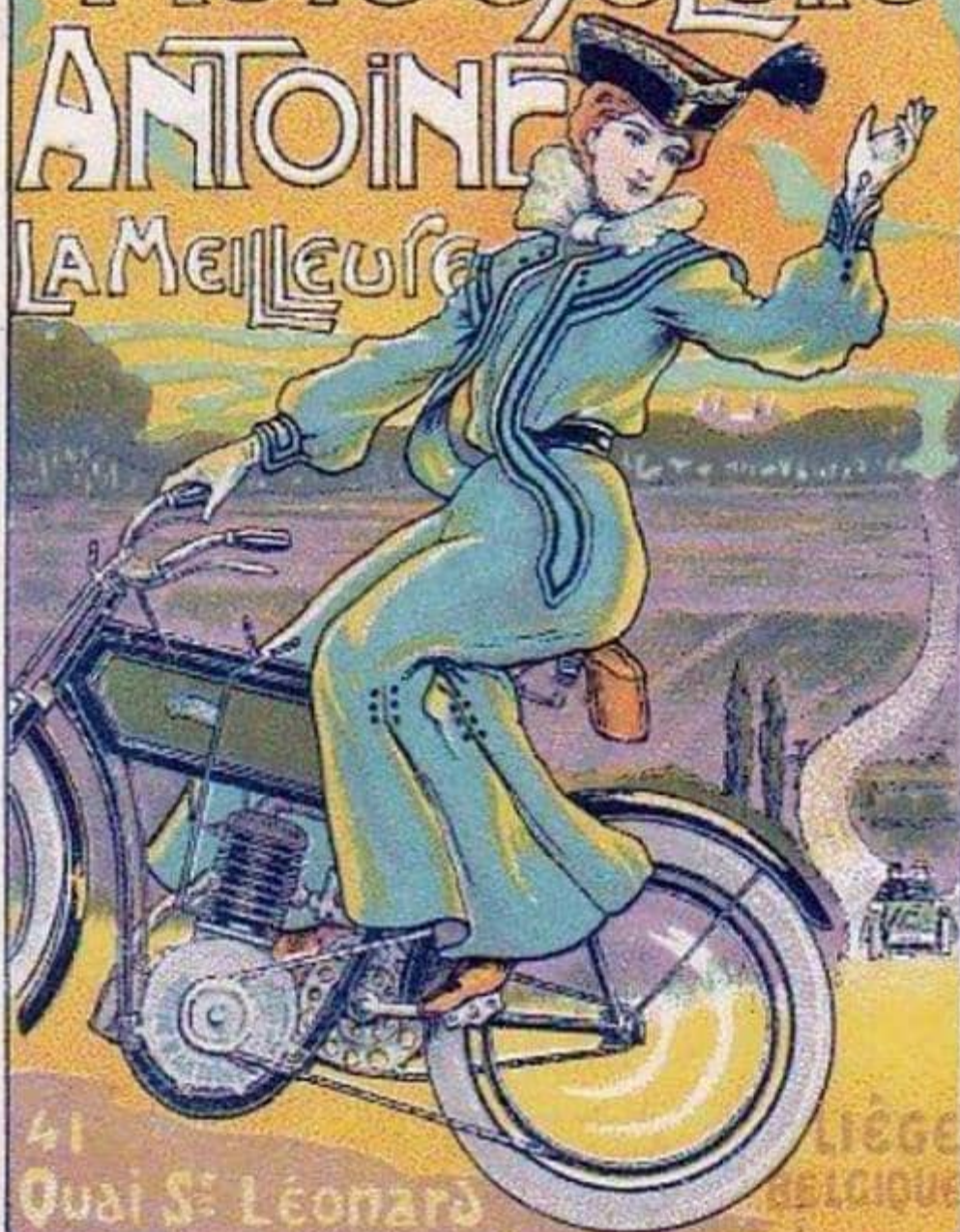
≡ PNEUS ≡  
**DUNLOP**





**IV GRAN PREMIO DE ESPAÑA**  
**X INTERNACIONAL DE BARCELONA**  
*PUNTUABLE PARA LOS*  
**CAMPEONATOS DEL MUNDO 1953**  
**4 DE OCTUBRE**  
*CIRCUITO DE MONTJUICH*  
**FIESTAS DE NTRA. SRA. DE LA MERCED**

# LA MOTOCYCLETTE ANTOINE LA MEILLEURE







# MOTO BLÉRIOT



ELLE NE ROULE PAS  
.....  
ELLE VOLE  
.....

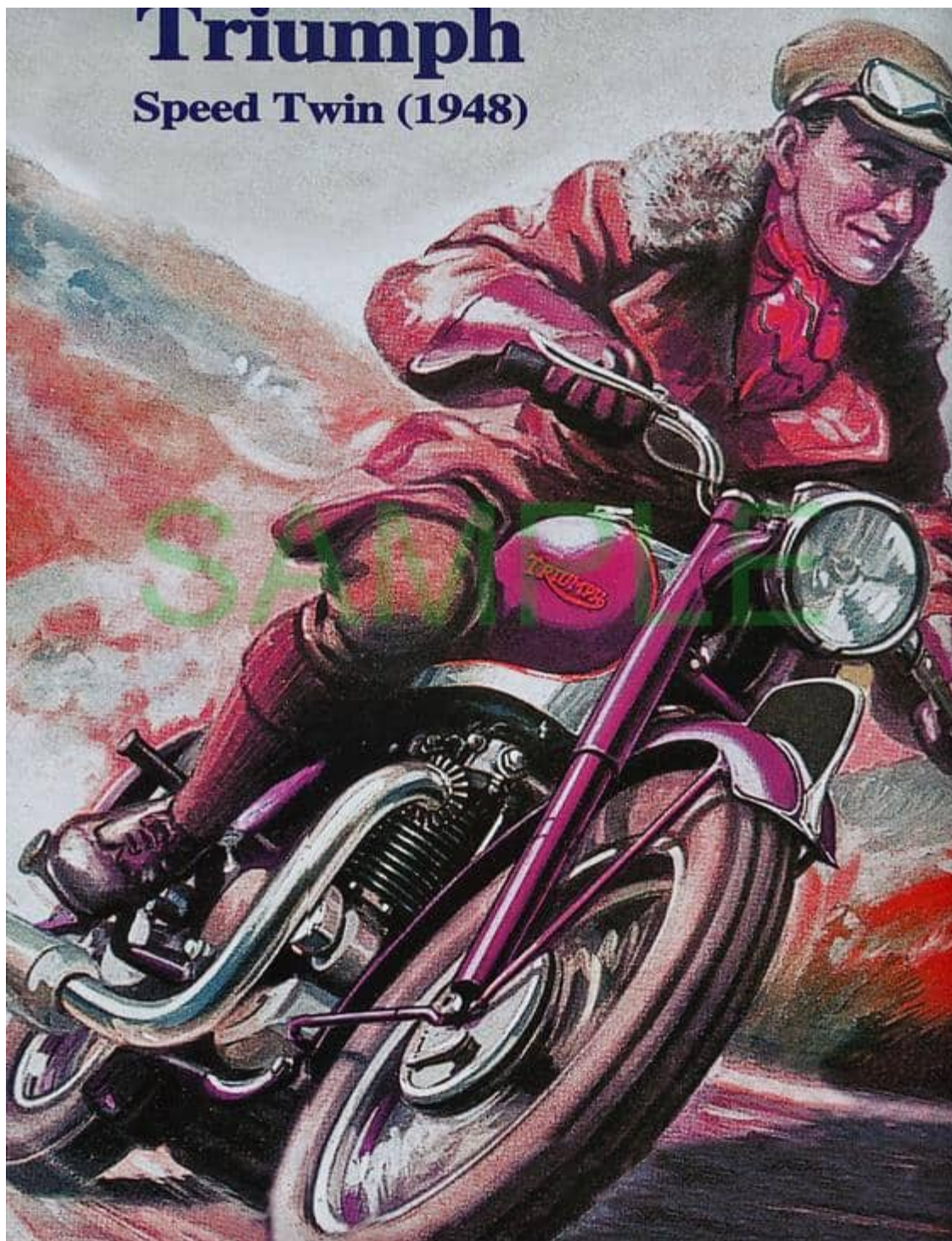
*Blériot Aéronautique*  
3. QUAI GALLIÉNI — SURESNES

CL. OFFICE & ED. GART



# Triumph

Speed Twin (1948)







50 Km. all'ora



**“MOTO RÊVE,,**  
**LA PIÙ LEGGERA DELLE BICICLETTE A MOTORE**  
**MILANO - Corso Magenta, 27**





# Magnat Debon



MAISON FONDÉE EN 1890

**LA MARQUE DE QUALITÉ**





LA MOTO  
**Peugeot**

LA GRANDE MARQUE NATIONALE



# Machines à Coudre *FRANÇAISES*

GNÔME  
ET RHÔNE





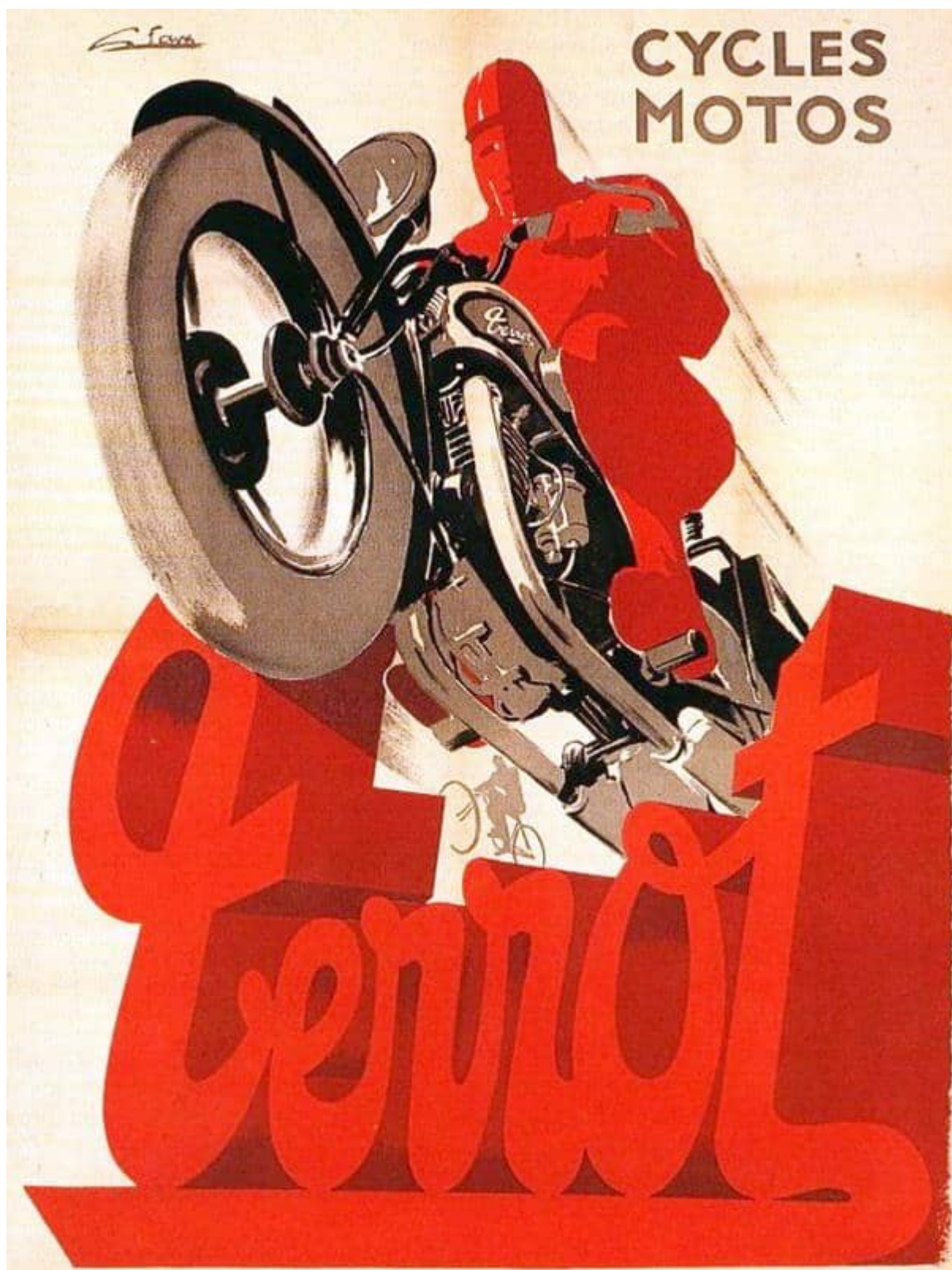


COMETTI  
1928

# **MOTOCYCLETTES** **GNOME & RHONE**

Éditions d'Art Robert LANG, 14, Rue de Marignan, Paris.

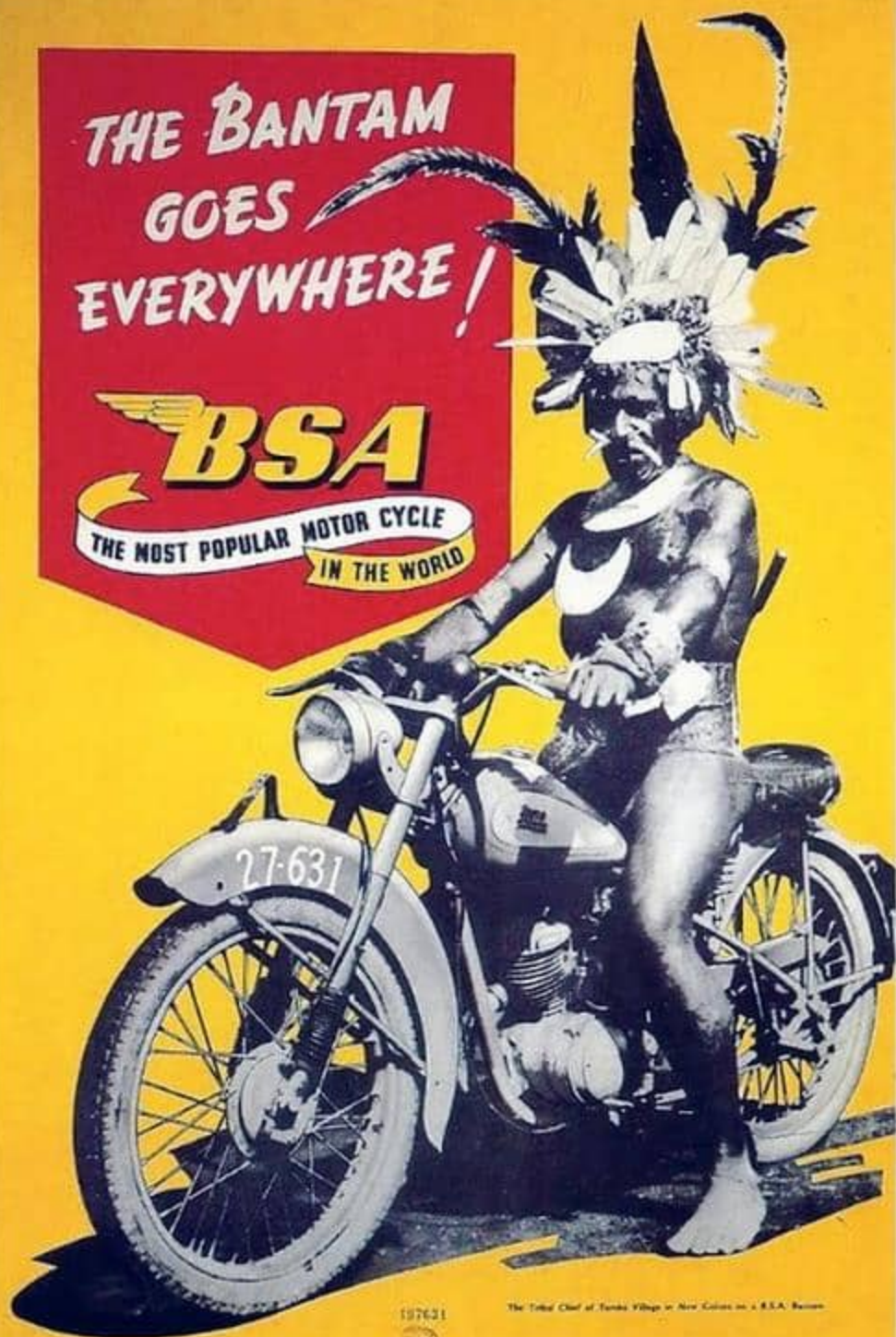
MODÈLE DÉPOSÉ





THE BANTAM  
GOES  
EVERYWHERE!

**BSA**  
THE MOST POPULAR MOTOR CYCLE  
IN THE WORLD



197631

The Tribal Chief of Tumbuk Village in New Guinea on a BSA Bantam

BSA MOTOR CYCLES LTD., BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND



# AUTOMOTO



POUR  
LE TOURISME  
LE SPORT  
LES AFFAIRES  
la  
BICYCLETTE + MOTEUR  
**AUTOMOTO**  
2 TEMPS  
1 HP, 5  
**S'IMPOSE**

NOTES SUR DEMANDE

R.C. Seine 212 040 B

**AUTOMOTO**

152, Av. MALAKOFF, PARIS 16<sup>e</sup>

VENTE A CREDIT

chez tous  
LES AGENTS DE LA MARQUE



la mieux étudiée!

Force · Confort · Souplesse

**MOTOCYCLETTES**

**Jean THOMANN**

PARIS

AGENT

BARATAUD & COURTEAU - Lits, 9 Rue St André - PARIS

Qui si vendono le **motociclette** della gran Marca Nazionale

# BIANCHI



Veduta generale delle Officine della Soc. An. EDOARDO BIANCHI - MILANO  
Capitale L. 30.000.000 interamente versato

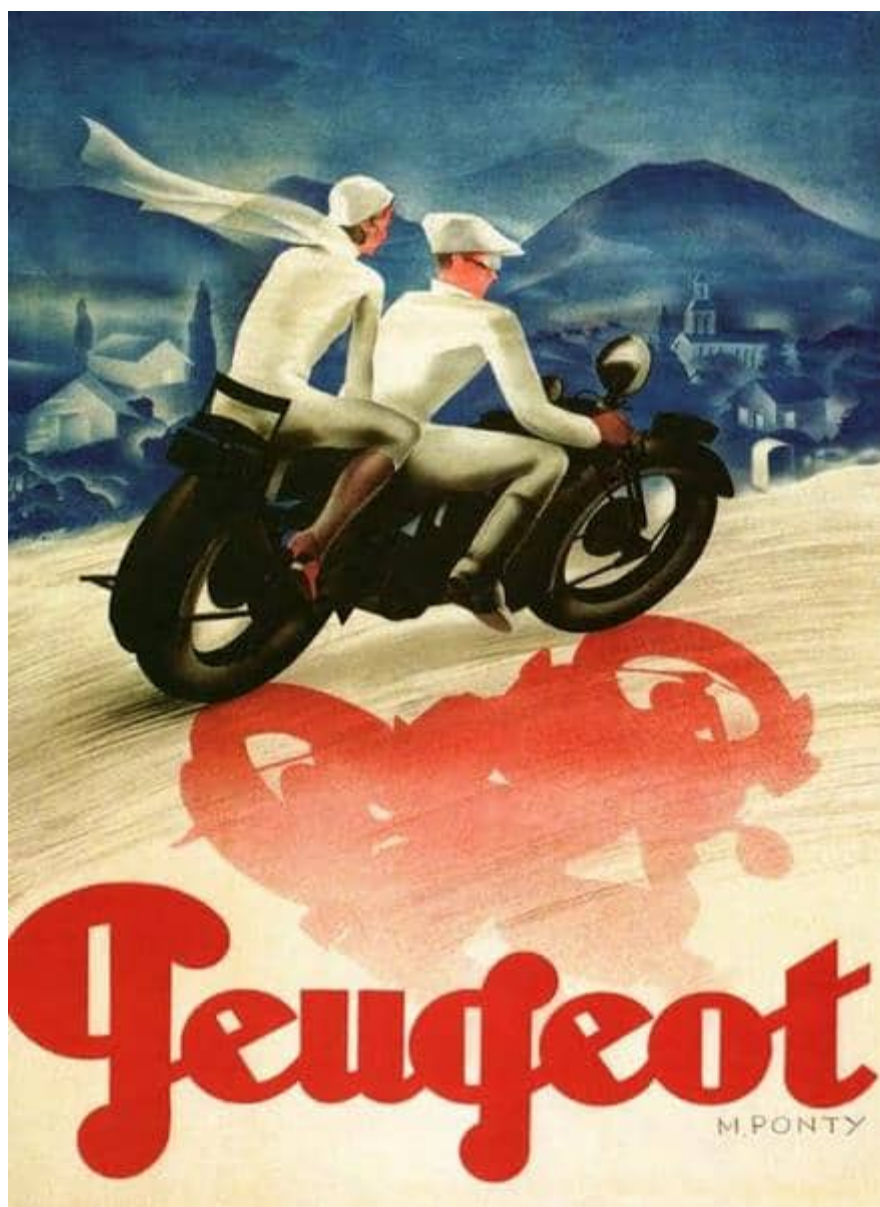
Trasformati C. Nello - Viale Lombardo, 10 - Milano



**D K W**



**ZSCHOPAUER MOTORENWERKE  
I.S. RASMUSSEN A.G. ZSCHOPAU I.S.A.**





# FABRIQUE NATIONALE D'ARMES DE GUERRE

(SOCIÉTÉ ANONYME) **HERSTAL-LIÈGE** (BELGIQUE)



1938



*La motocyclette*

*et le side-car*





*Ce qu'ils emportent: "Double Lait"*



**CÔTE D'OR**





VERANSTALTER: OBERSTE NATIONALE SPORTBEHÖRDE  
FÜR DIE DEUTSCHE KRAFTFAHRT (O. N. S.)  
DURCHFÜHRUNG UND ORGANISATION: NSKK-MOTORGRUPPE SACHSEN

# GROSSER PREIS VON EUROPA

FÜR MOTORRÄDER AUF DEM SACHSENRING BEI HOHENSTEIN-ERNSTTHAL

AM 7. AUGUST 1938

START 9 UHR



UNE ASSURANCE  
SUR LA VIE

UNE SÉCURITÉ  
ABSOLUE

avec le Casque

HERBON

M  
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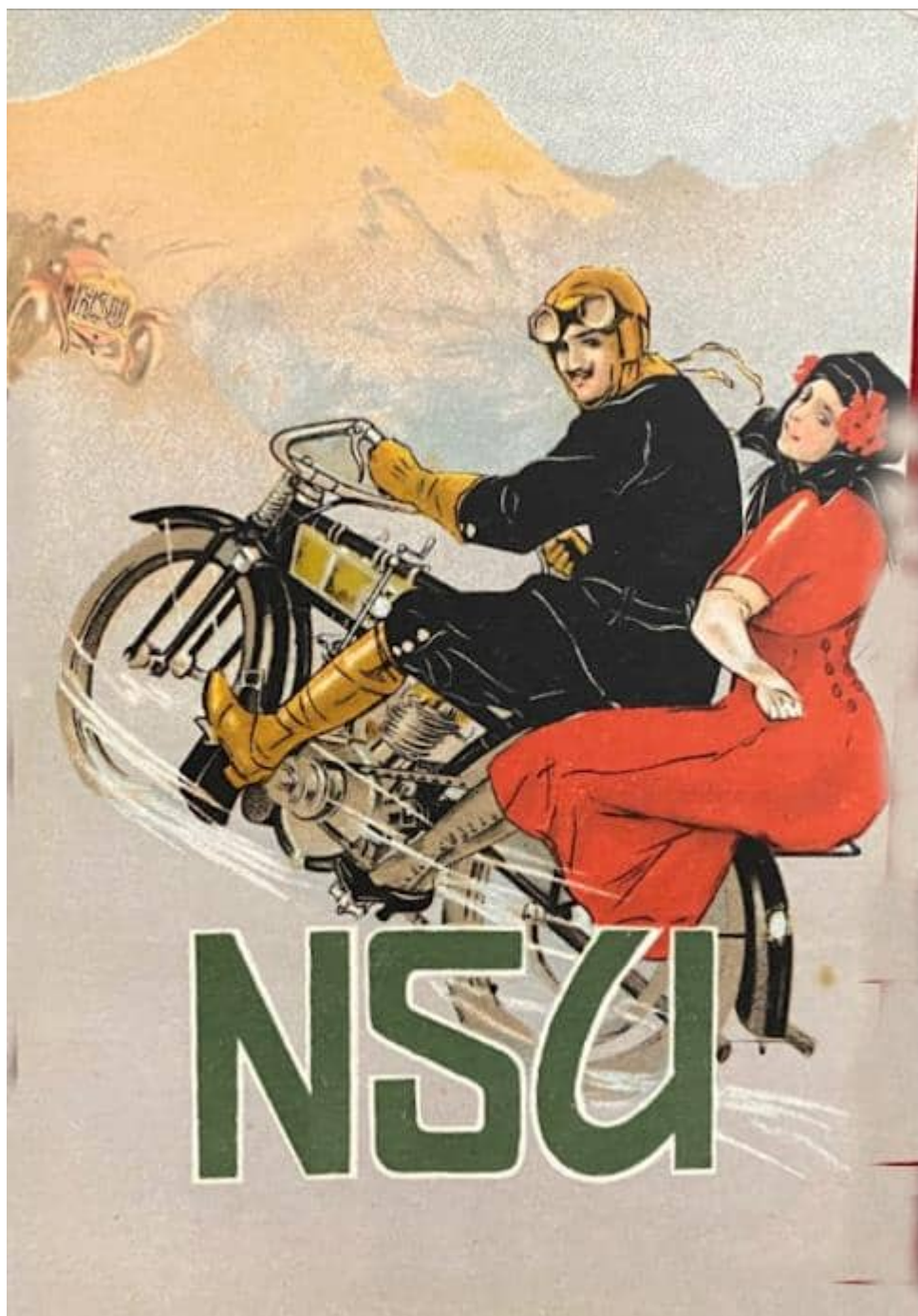
*Les Sacoches et Accessoires "RECORD"  
pour Vélos - Motos - Scooters, vous  
garantissent le maximum de satisfaction  
Articles vendus aux meilleurs prix, chez  
les principaux Agents*

Fabriqués industriellement par la S. A.

HERBON

*Saint-Julien-en-Jarez*

Imprimerie NAUDET — Saint-Julien-en-Jarez

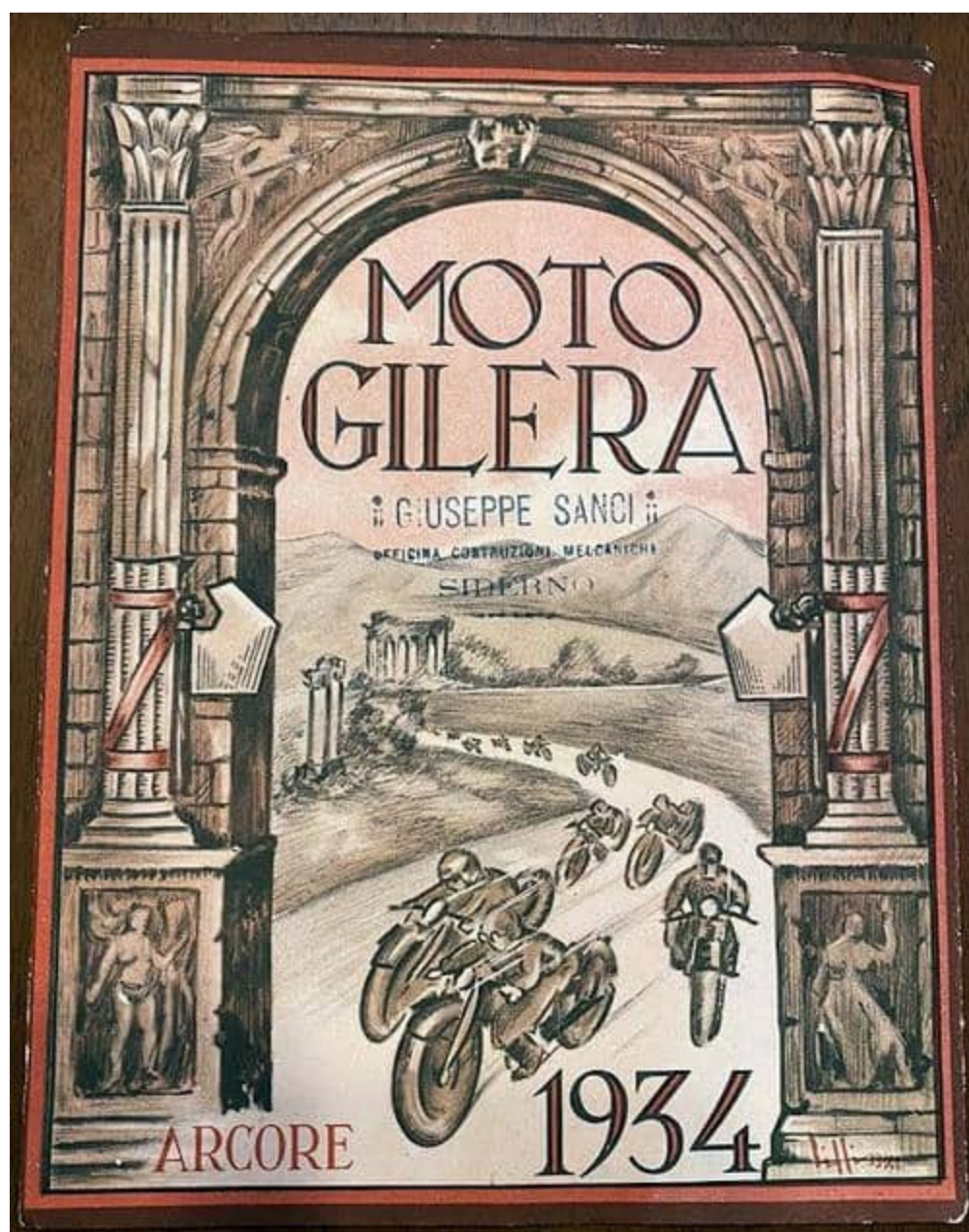












VOYAGES-REPORTAGE — N° 1091.

30 CENTIMES

Paraître le 25 Mai 1930

# *L'Intrepide*

AVENTURE — SPORT — VOYAGES

MOTOCYCLISTE



Le jeune Français perd un terrible accident au milieu d'eux. (Livre page 6.)





This striking image appeared

in a 1930 issue of Popular Science.

Sarà Pulhina?





Considerazioni estetiche



Cedepinto





Gita di piacere !!!...

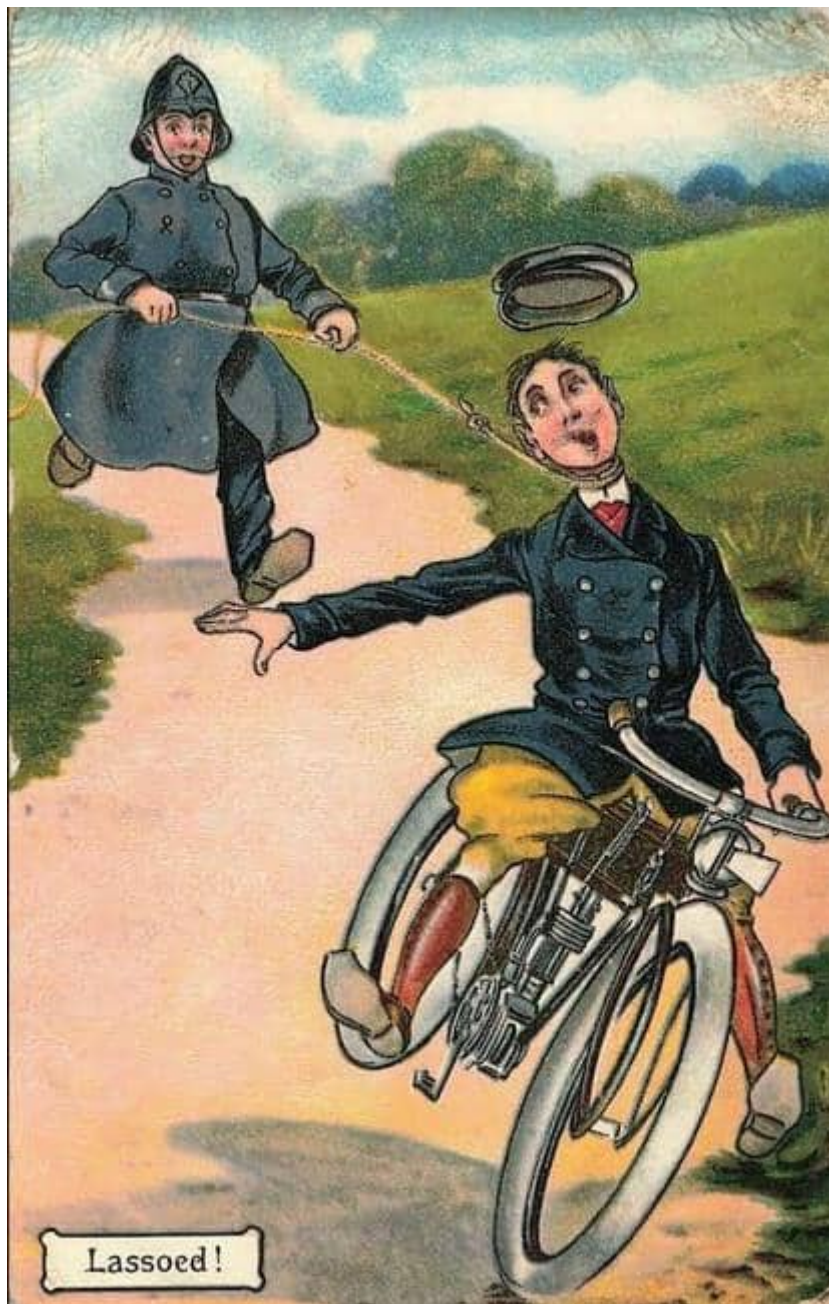




Here are a couple that are clearly English...







Meanwhile, de l'autre côté de La Manche...





“That old French gallantry. ‘Clumsy! You nearly made me fall into your side-car!’ ‘Believe me, dear lady, it would have been a pleasure to accommodate you...’”



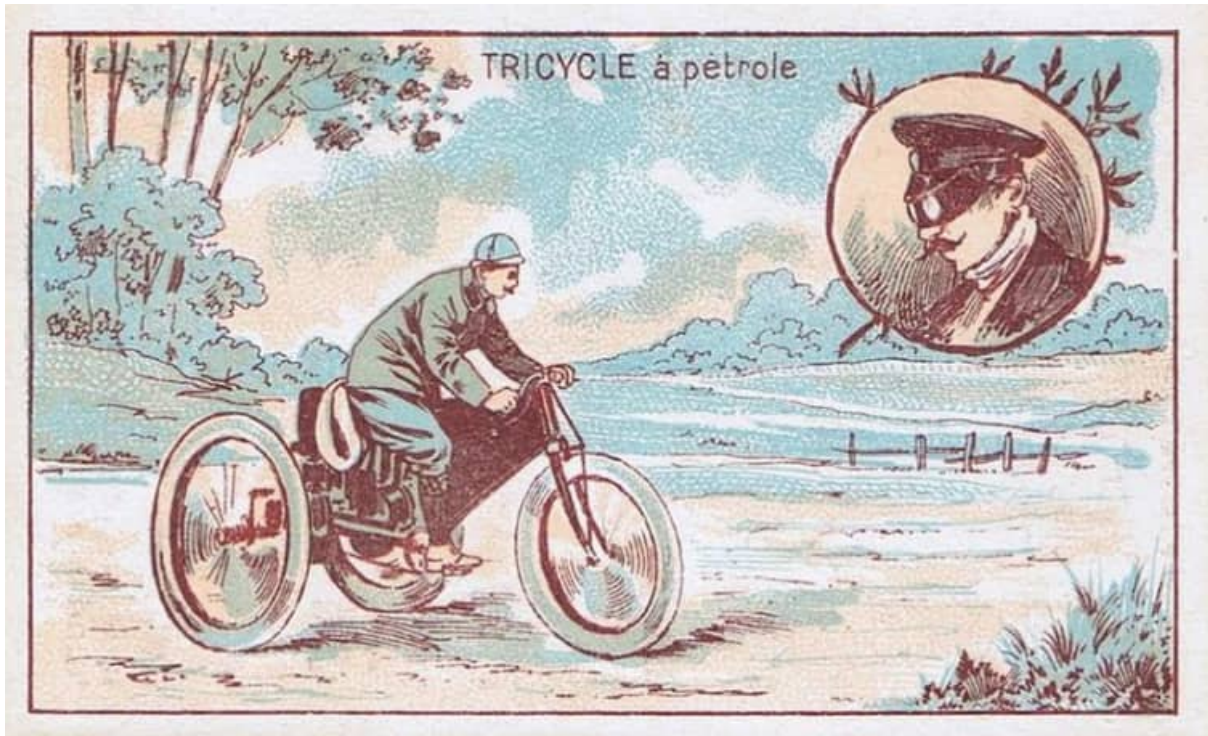




“Locomotion across the ages: The petrol tricycle—the bane of pedestrians who are too slow to get out of its way—is one of the most distasteful means of locomotion. Its unpleasant smell, the nervous fatigue suffered by the rider, have done much to slow down the vogue of the petrol tricycle, which is gradually being replaced by light carts or automobiles powered by electricity or mineral spirits.”







“Here is the fast but noisy petrol tricycle. It passes by, with a pace that is too often haphazard, crushing here and there the legs of dogs that are too indiscreet, jostling the passer-by who does not park quickly enough, raising a whirlwind of dust that fills the air and our smells-with the unpleasant fumes of its oil. When it is stopped, it is there blowing, spitting, panting, shaking, like an apocalyptic monster, a fantastic animal that one finds hard to believe was born by progress. But the petrol tricycle is fading away, gradually replaced by the light carts or the automobiles, the powerful motors, powered by electricity or mineral spirits. Judging by the improvements which these last vehicles are receiving at every moment, the petroleum tricycle, with its nervous exhaustion for those who ride it, will soon have passed away and will be relegated to the pages of history, in the same way as the ancient wooden velocipede or the penny-farthing.”



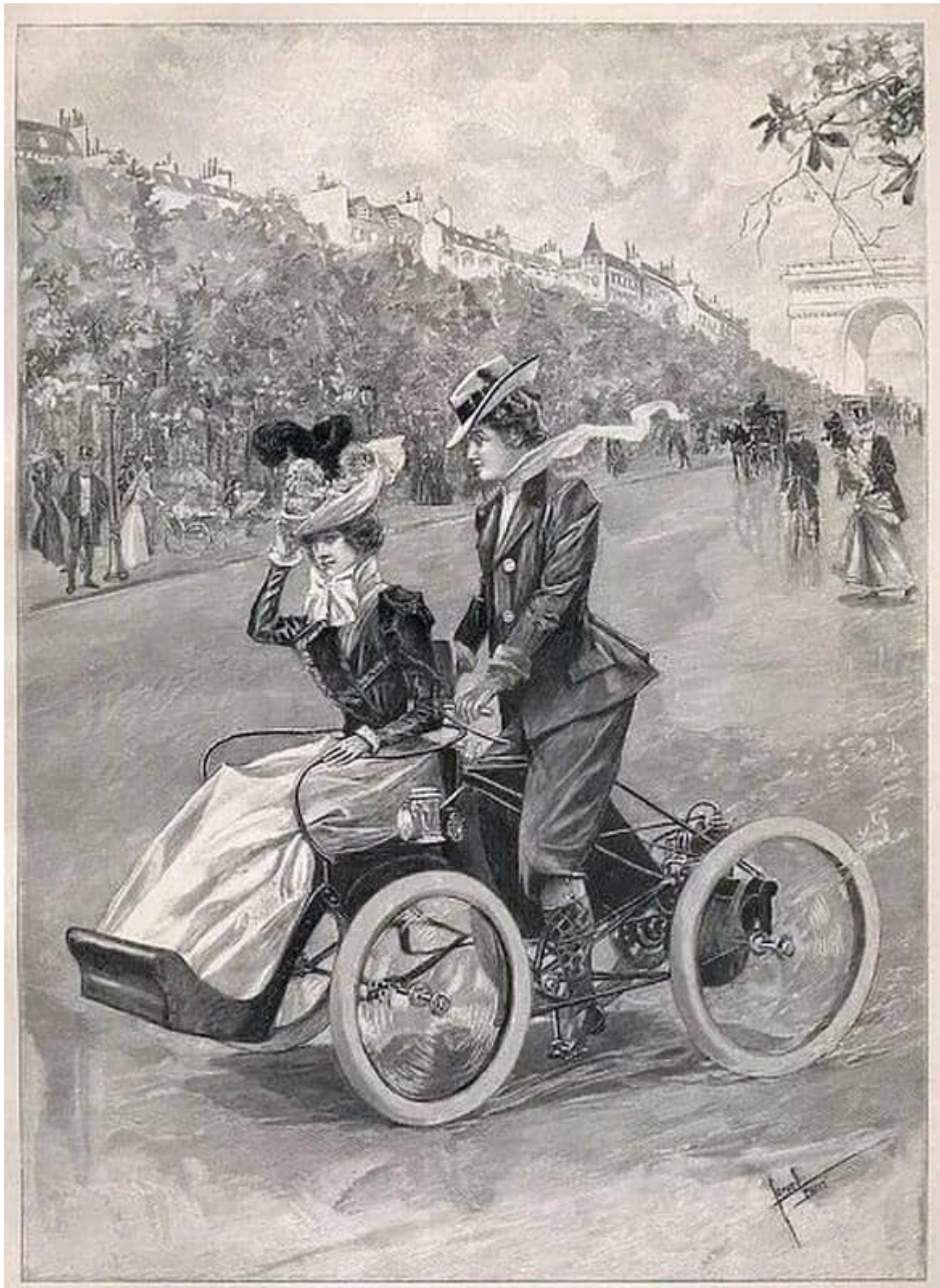


"SHOW ME THE WAY, PLEASE"



UN YANK QUI AURA DE LA PEINE A RETROUVER JAMAIS LE CHEMIN DE SA CASERNE

This delightful illustration of a Great War DR and two demoselles comes from *Le Vie Parisienne*.

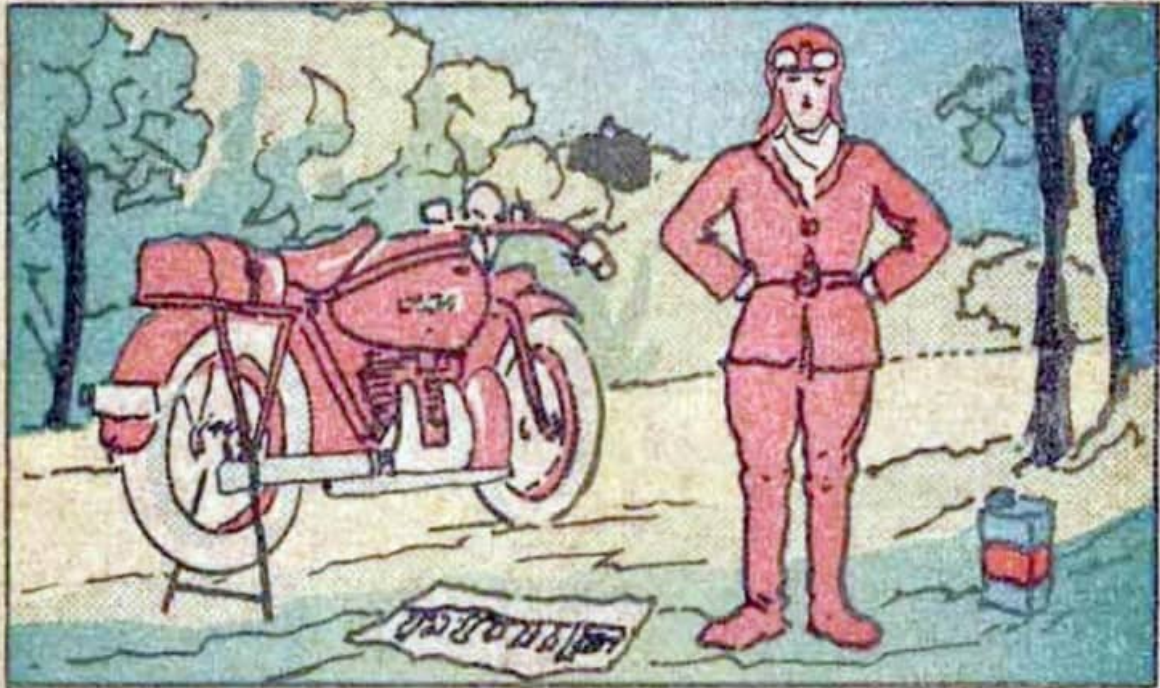


It's 1898 on the Champs-Élysées; motoring in the Belle Epoch.





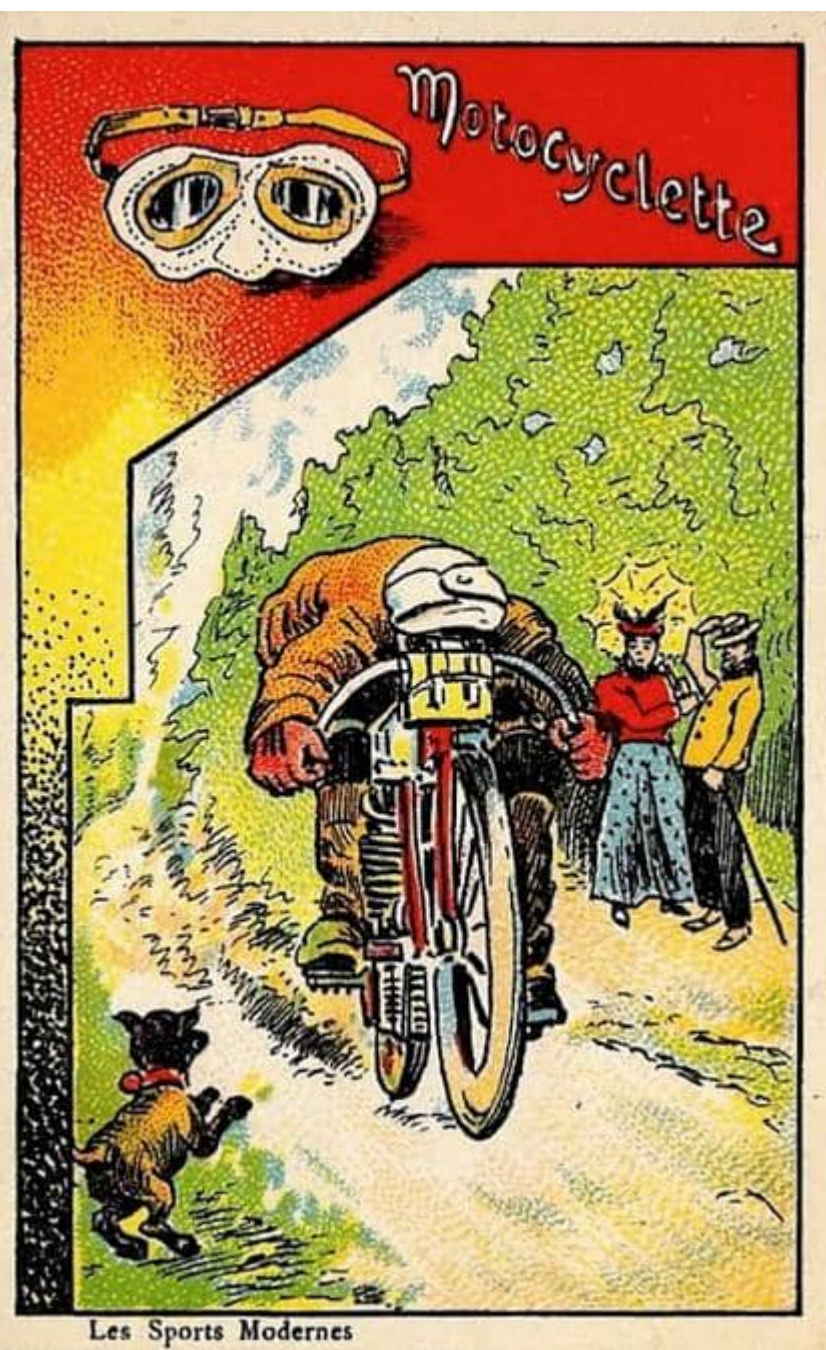
“The motor cycle is very common today and matches the speeds reached by cars, with low consumption and great manoeuvrability. With internal combustion engines of 2, 3 or 5hp they easily carry two people, at 40-50km/h; they are often fitted with a third wheel, a light body equipped with a comfortable seat. This is the sidecar.”



Le Motocycliste ne trouve plus sa clef anglaise.  
La voyez-vous ?.....

"The motor cyclist has lost his monkey wrench. Can you see it?"



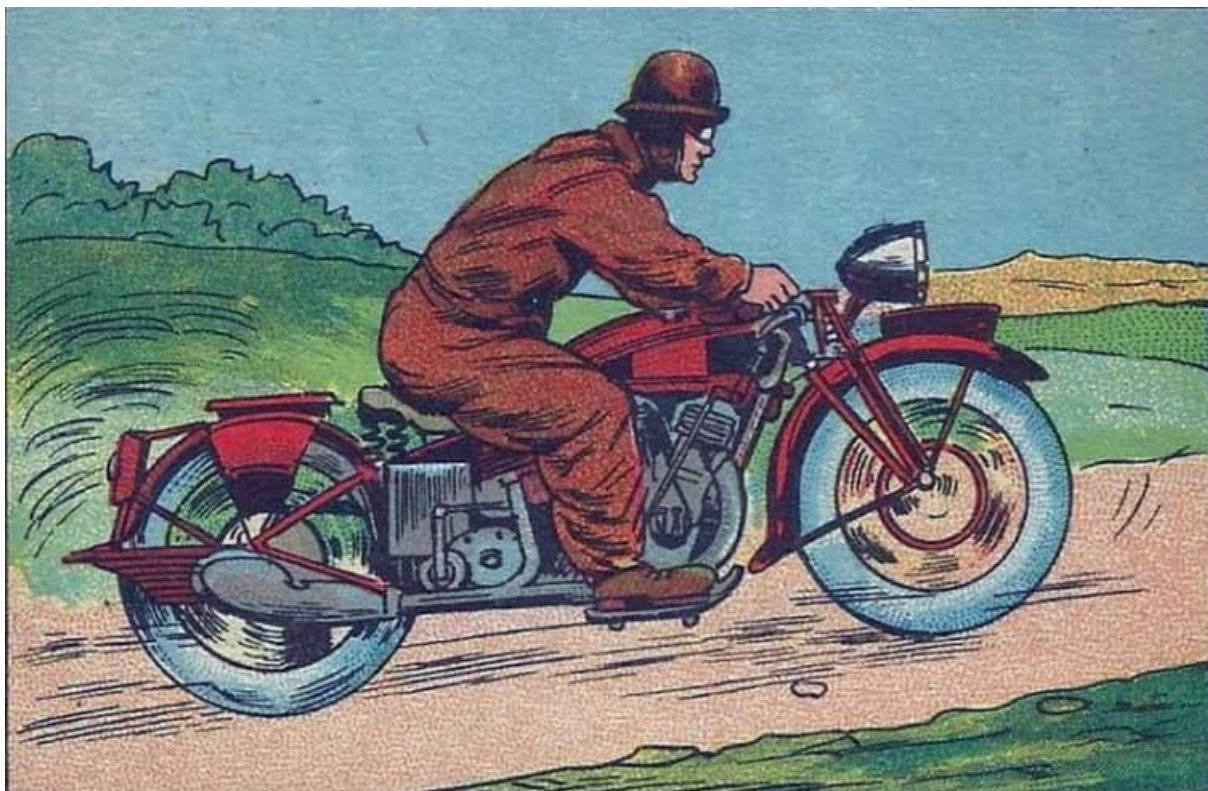


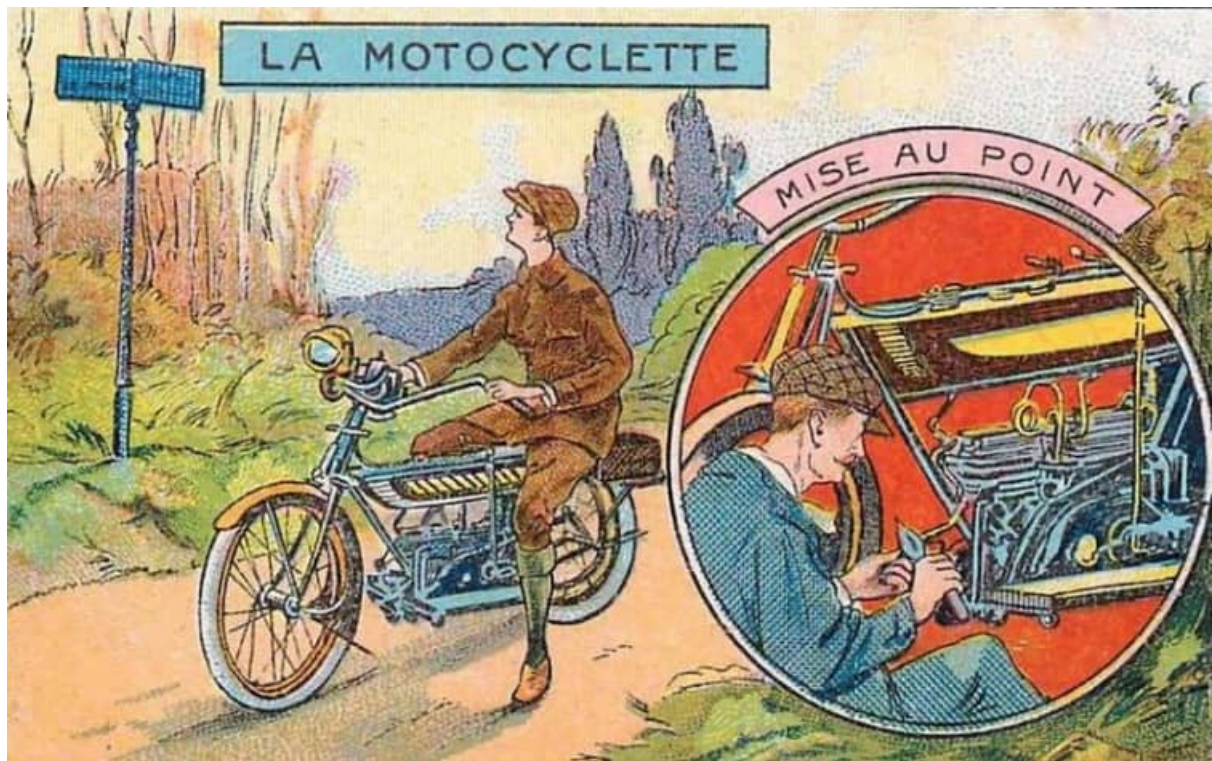


“The motor cycle has become very popular since it has been turned into a real sports machine. A rear seat allows to take a passenger, which also increases the stability of the vehicle, the motor cycle is very manoeuvrable and the cost of its maintenance is extremely low.”

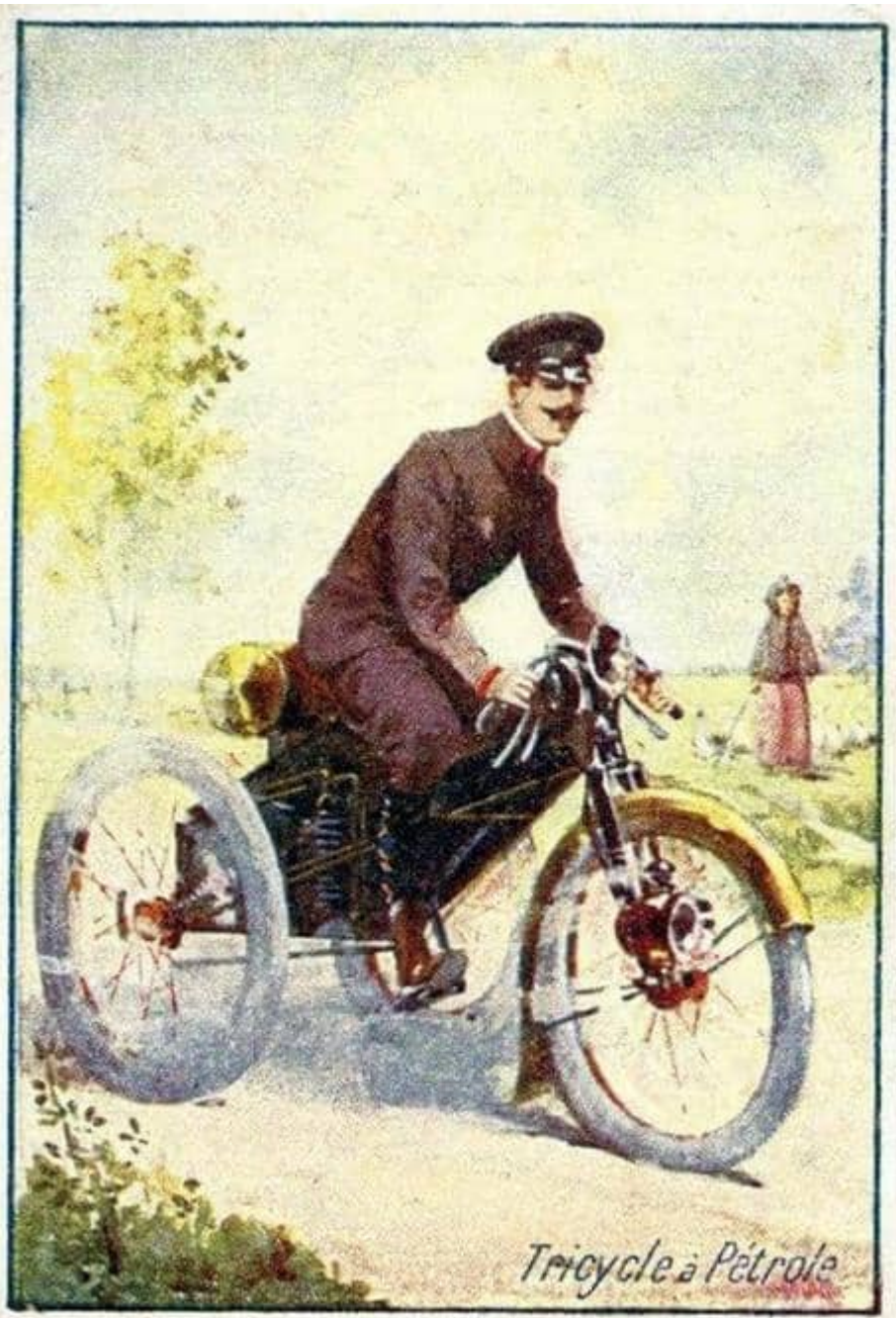


# MOTOCYCLETTE DE COURSE









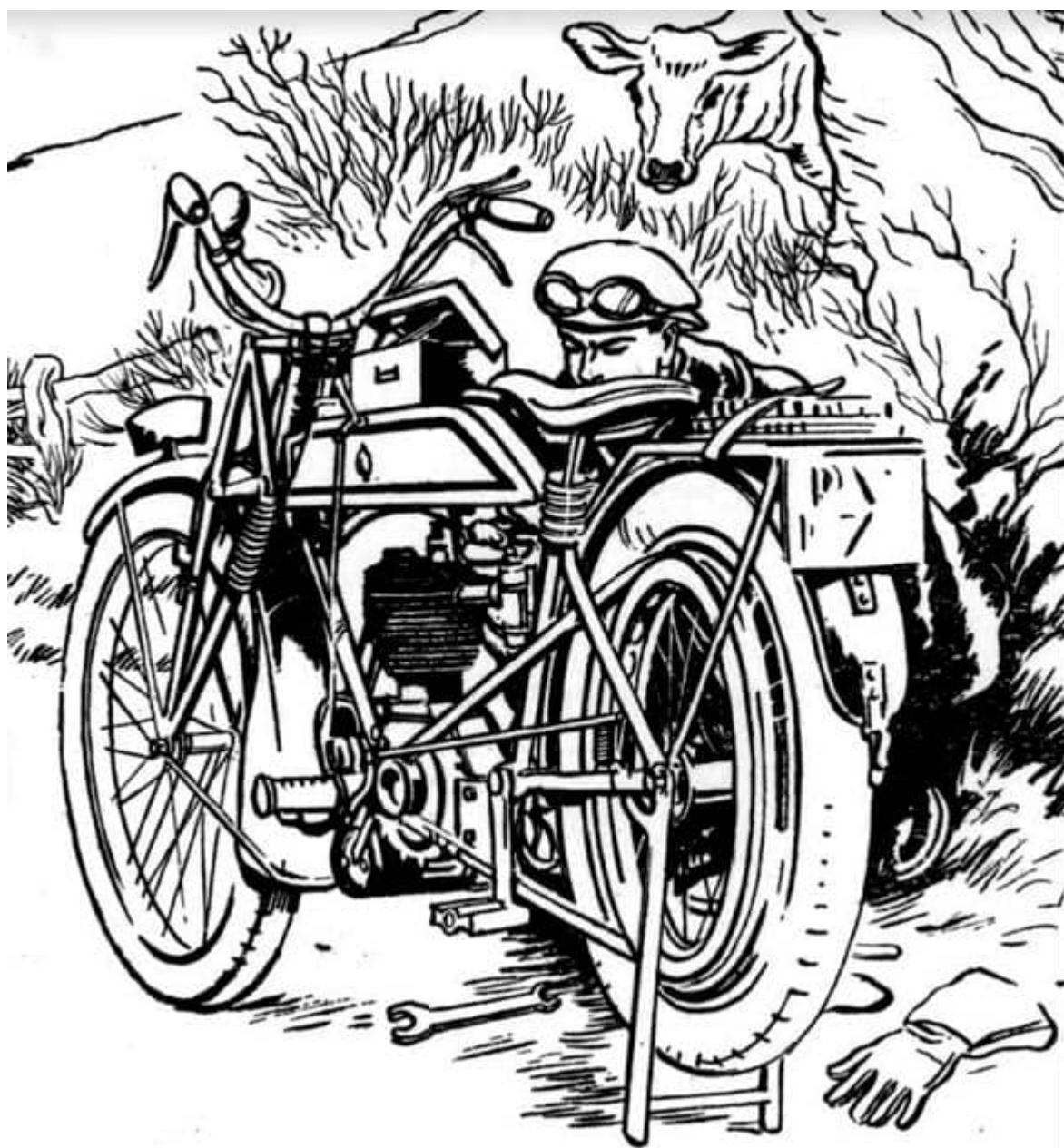




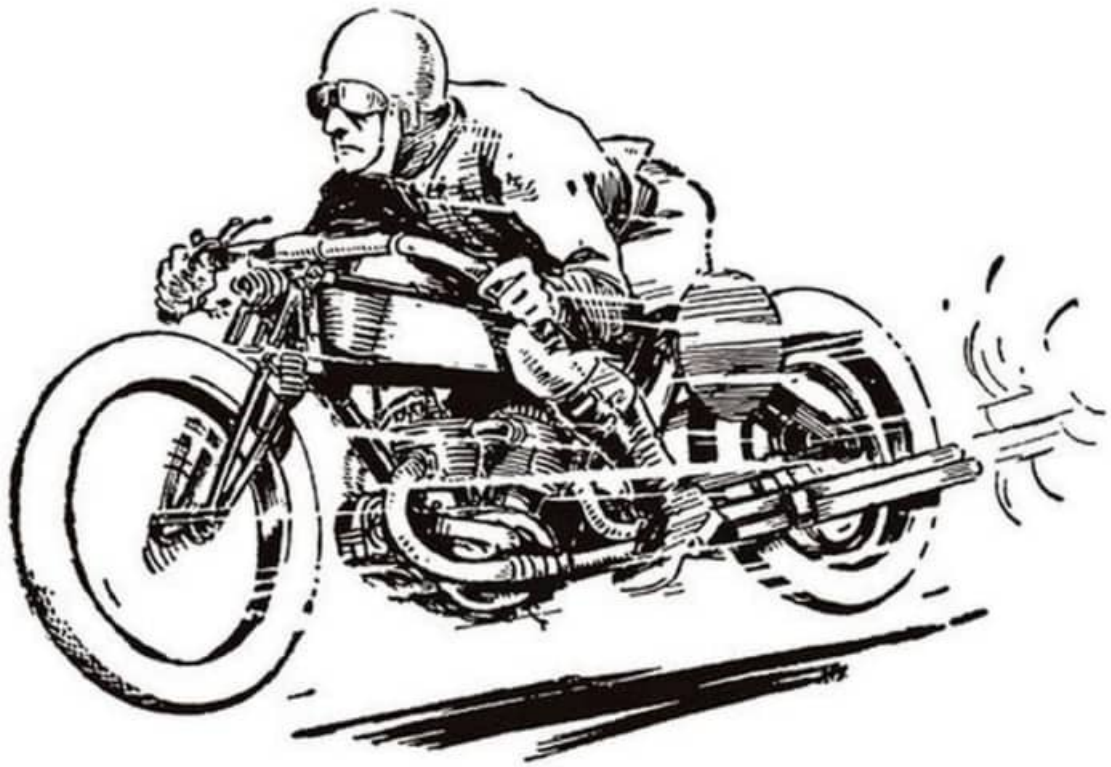


This French illustration dates from 1951.

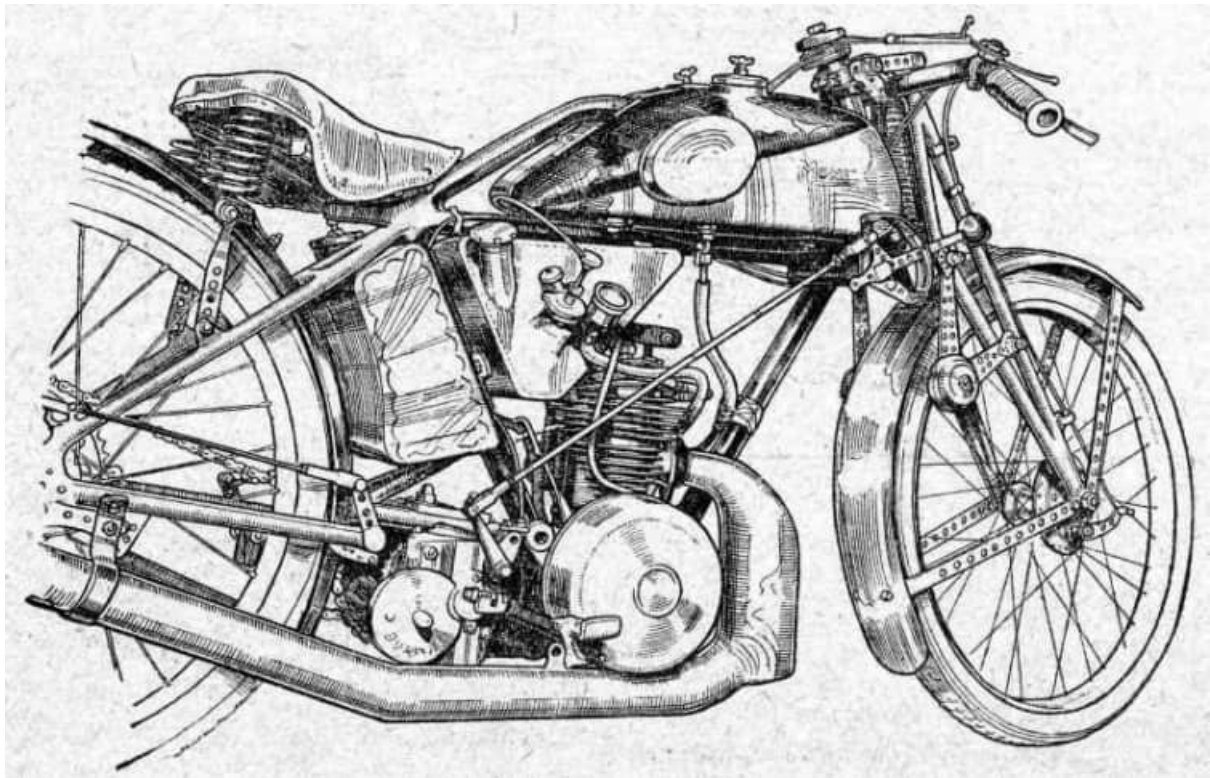
*Just arrived, the latest batch of illustrations from the seemingly bottomless archive of my buddy Fanfan. I enjoyed them, I think you will too.*



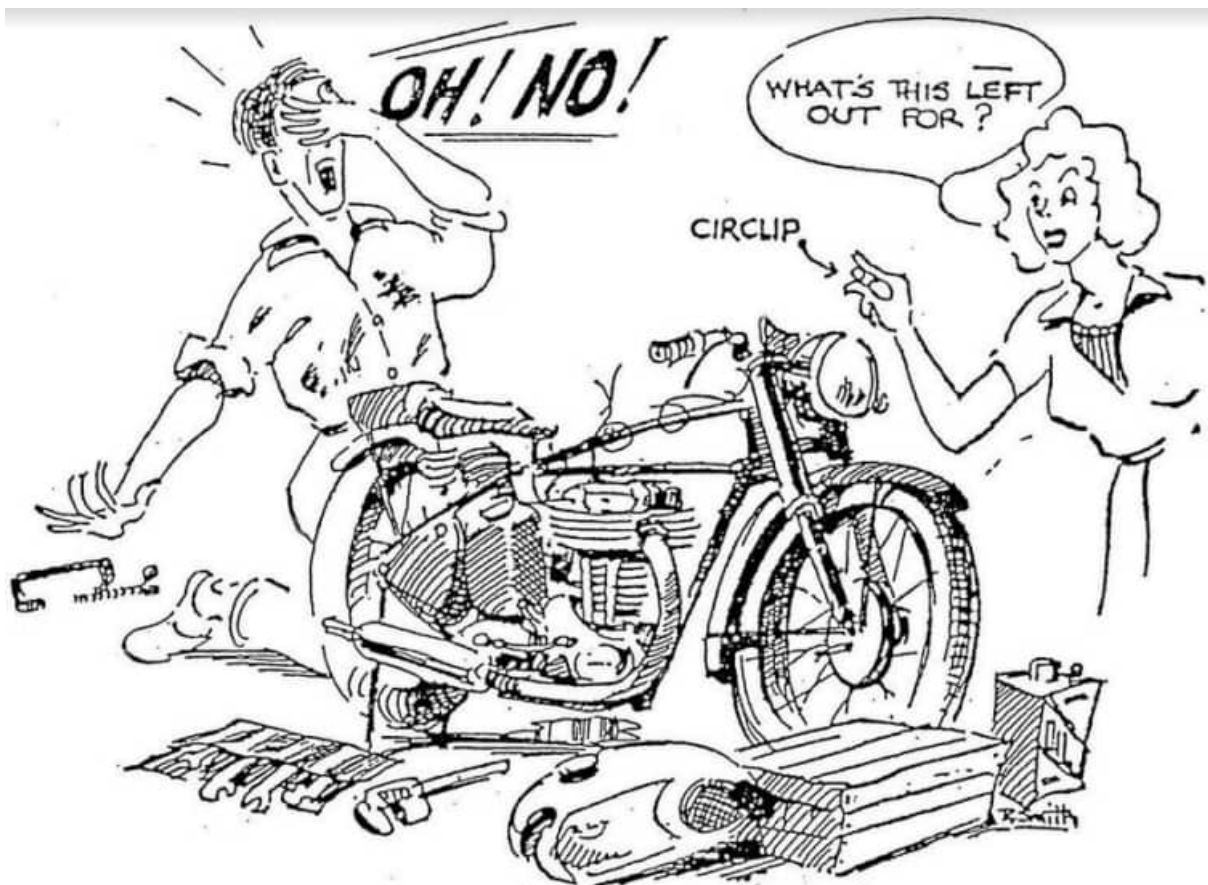




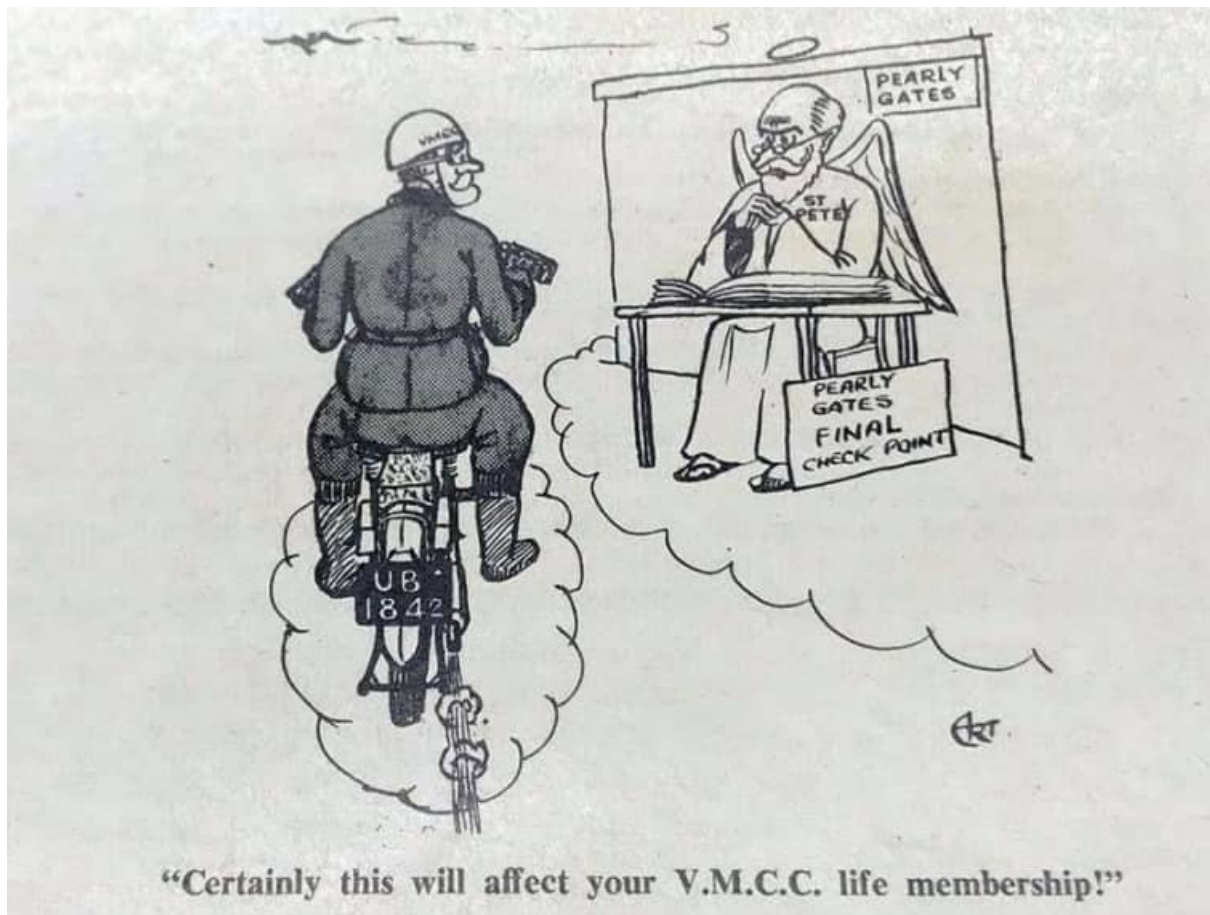
This illustration could only depict Brooklands. The original caption, in case you can't make it out, reads: "I set off at full bore".



This stylish illustration depicts a 1929 Monet Goyon that won the Grand prix de France at Le Mans in 1929.





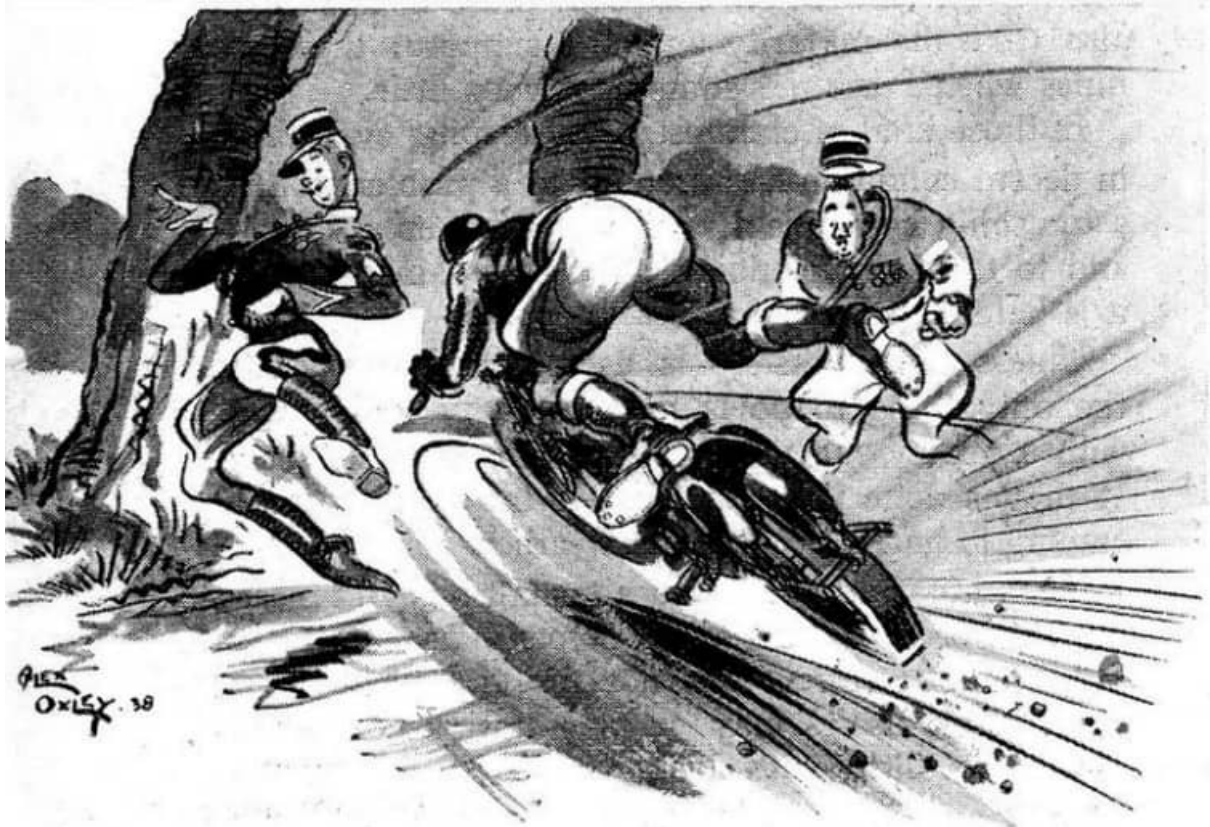


“Oh! these cars that crowd us! You are always afraid... let it be! If you are in a sidecar, just let yourself be carried along gently...it is wonderful!...”



"Don't be afraid, I feel in control of myself!" "I don't mind you, but what about the bike?"





*"Excitement was intense . . . as I left the road to dive between two astonished and badly frightened gendarmes . . ."*

This one is clearly an illustration from a humorous yarn but its well worth a look in its own right.

- auf Frigeo!  
- wir trinken  
oft junge Liebe  
mit Frigeo!

VON QUALITÄT DURCH DIE ERKENNTNISSE

**So beliebt ist Frigeo!**  
BRAUSE-PULVER-UND TRINKTABLETTEN  
- das Hausgetränk für Jedermann -  
prickelnd, erfrischend, durststillend!

SCHUTZMARKE FRIGEL-STEIN



**GAS RATIONING**  
CAN'T STOP ME

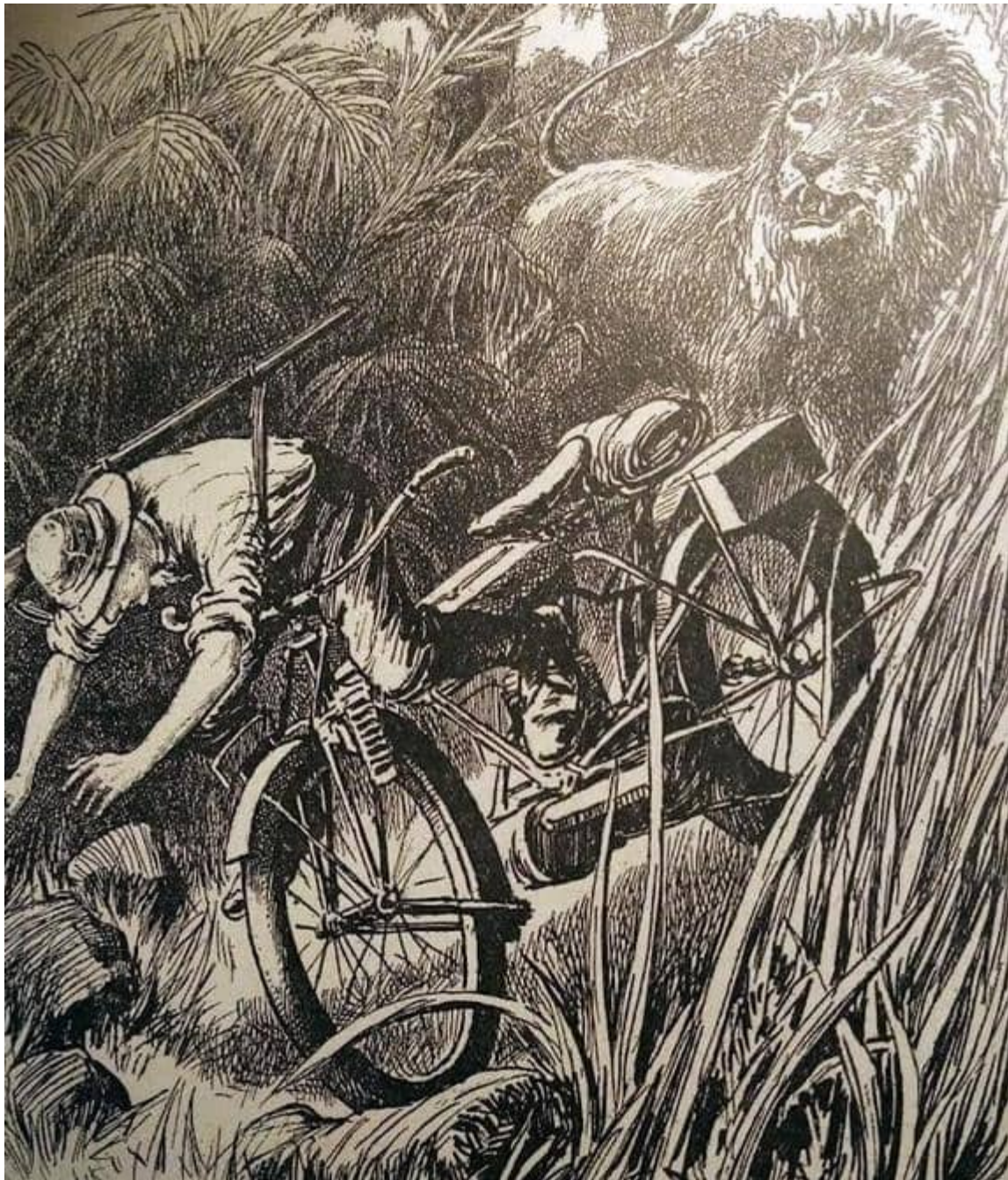


WHEN I'M ON

**MANEUVERS!**

AC129

©MWM

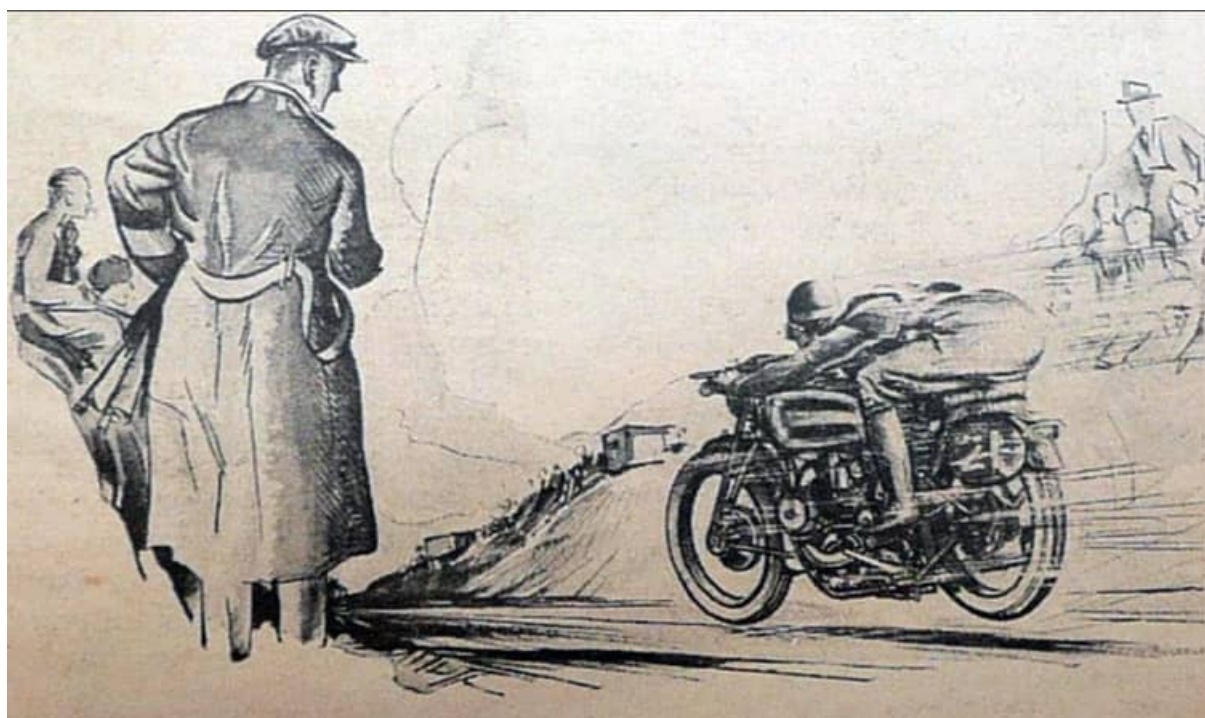


This illustration, presumably from an adventure story, dates from 1916.





Bersagliere Motociclista.







Yes, time was when bike thieves wore a suit and tie. But a scumbag is still a scumbag.



Not every badge tells a story, but this one does. In 1917, when this badge was made, the Henderson marque passed into the hands of Ignaz Schwinn, who owned Excelsior. The Excelsior name was already used in England and Germany so export models were marketed as the American-X.





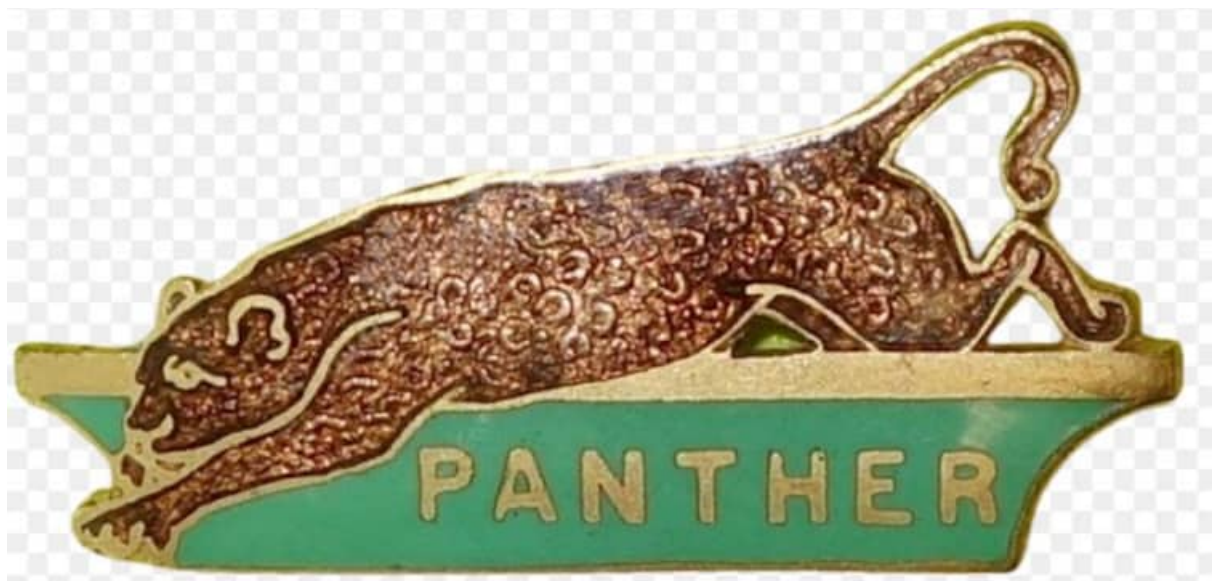
These two badges are Excelsior too, but the proper Excelsior, made in Brummagen.







Another badge with a story. When AJS went into voluntary liquidation in 1931 the Stevens brothers set up a shoestring operation and, over the next seven years, produced about 1,000 excellent 250, 350 and 500cc singles under the Stevens marque. This is their badge.



No story here; but this (probably 1950s) Panther badge is rather fine.

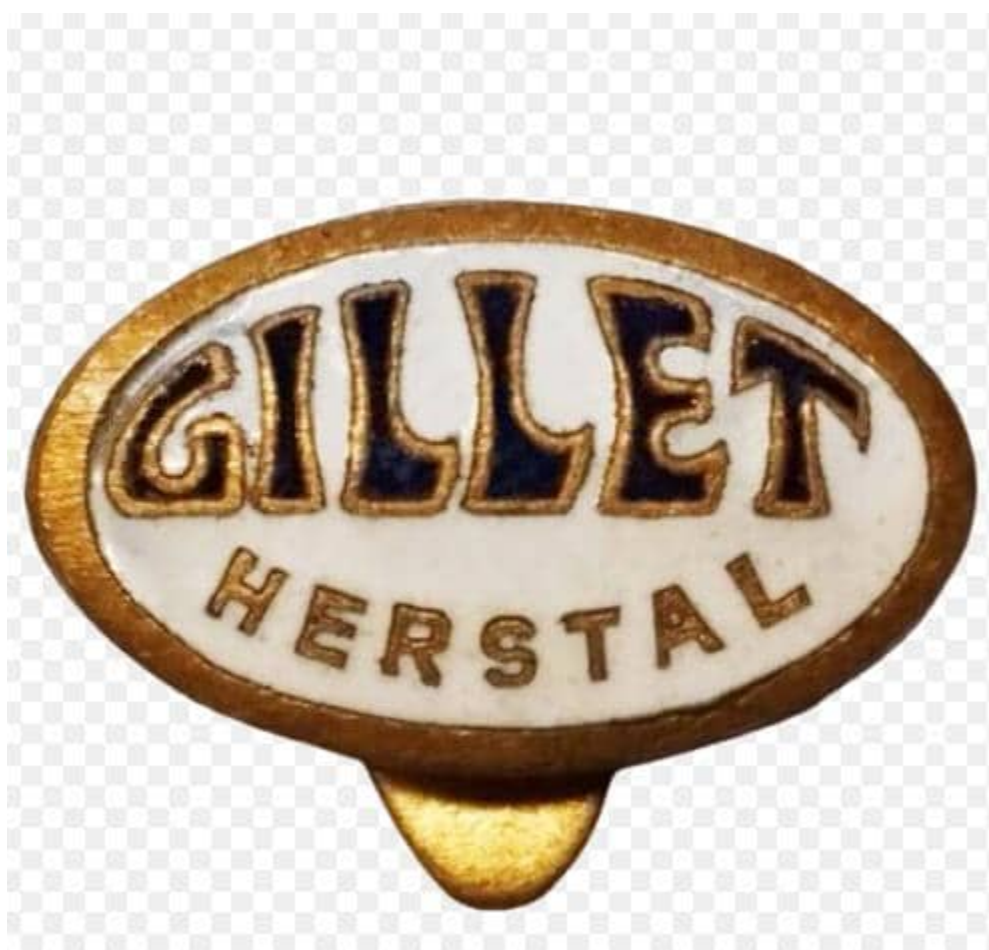


New Imperial was one of the great pioneer manufacturers, and they made a pretty badge too.



















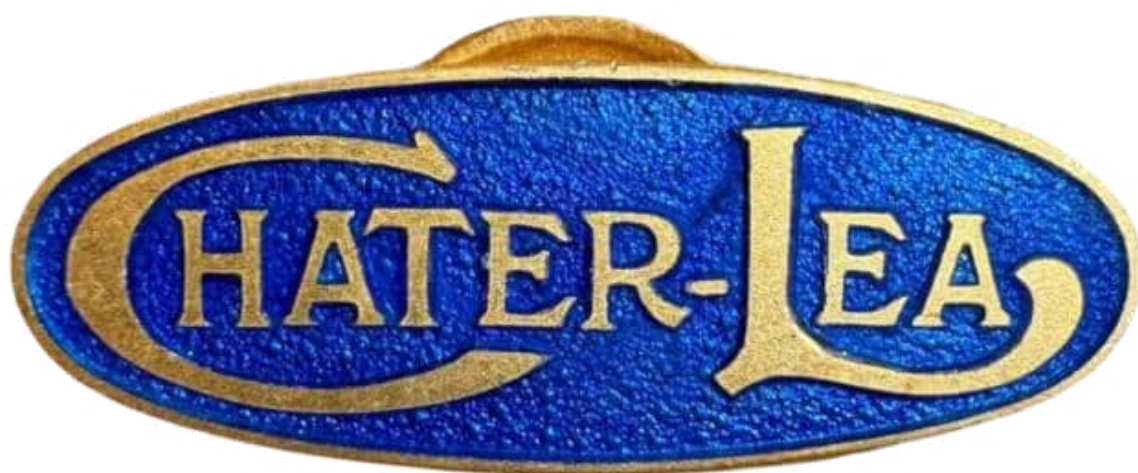


















You wouldn't think the retreat from Moscow would be an obvious subject for a French oil ad..."A motorised Grande Armée such as the emperor would undoubtedly have created if he had known about motorcycle and the new Kervoline".



The Eclipse company, which supplied 'free engine pulleys', produced a series of a dozen striking promotional cards depicting leading American riders, high-profile Eclipse customers and employees against New York landmarks. L-R: Glenn Curtiss, Jake De Rosier, Eclipse employee AC Rice and amateur cyclist Walter Goerke.



This one depicts Clara Wagner with one of the Wagner motor cycles her dad George made.





L-R: Amateur champion cyclist Oliver Dorlon, Eclipse employee JC Ferguson and professional cyclist Floyd McFarland.



L-R: world champion cyclist Frank Kramer and King Manuel of Portugal

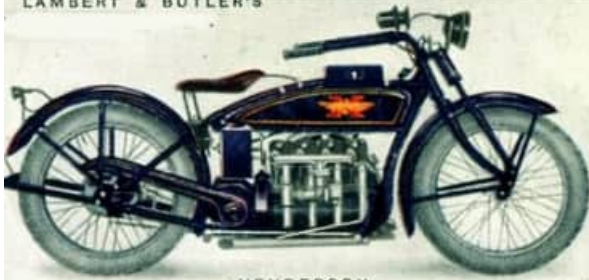


L-R: Professional cyclist Eddie Root, Eclipse vice-president Ralph D Webster and champion motorcyclist Raymond Seymour.

*Back in the 1920s, when doctors offered fags to nervous patients, Lambert & Butler issued a couple of series of cards depicting some of the finest motor cycles of the day; here's a selection.*

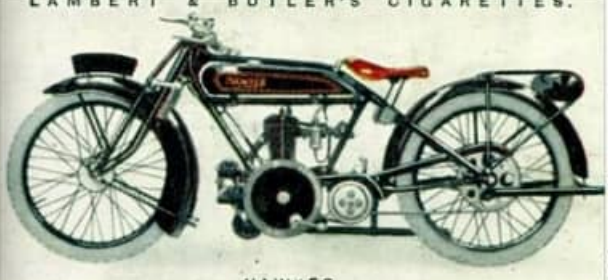


LAMBERT & BUTLER'S



HENDERSON.

LAMBERT & BUTLER'S CIGARETTES.



HAWKER.

LAMBERT & BUTLER'S CIGARETTES.



CLYNO.

LAMBERT & BUTLER'S CIGARETTES.



COVENTRY VICTOR "SUPER-SIX."

LAMBERT & BUTLER'S  
CIGARETTES.



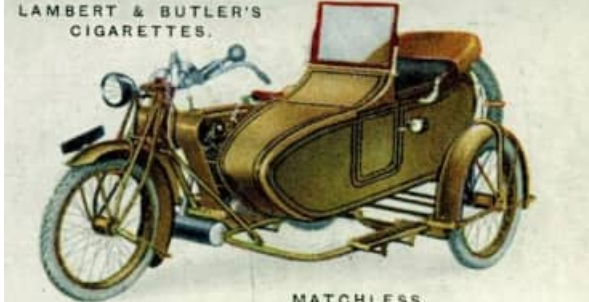
NORTON "BIG FOUR."

LAMBERT & BUTLER'S  
CIGARETTES.



OMEGA.

LAMBERT & BUTLER'S  
CIGARETTES.



MATCHLESS.

LAMBERT & BUTLER'S CIGARETTES.



MARTINSYDE.

LAMBERT & BUTLER'S  
CIGARETTES.



INDIAN SUPER-CHIEF

LAMBERT  
& BUTLER'S

CIGARETTES.



HUMBER.

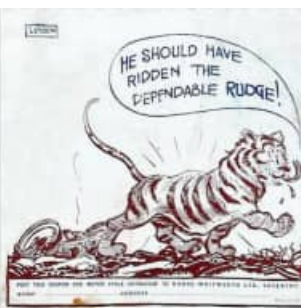
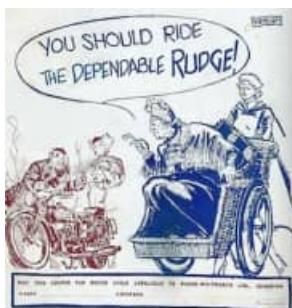




Both these fire-fighting sidecars were made by Merryweather; the sidecar on the left carried a hose, ladder, fire-extinguishers and first aid kit; t'other carried a demountable pump to be powered by two or four firefighters.



MOTOR CYCLING.







The slogan on the French Rudge ad (for QD wheels) translates as: "Get out of the way so I can get on with it!"

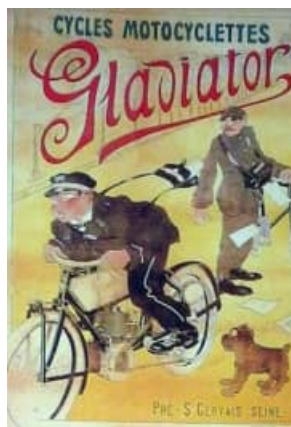


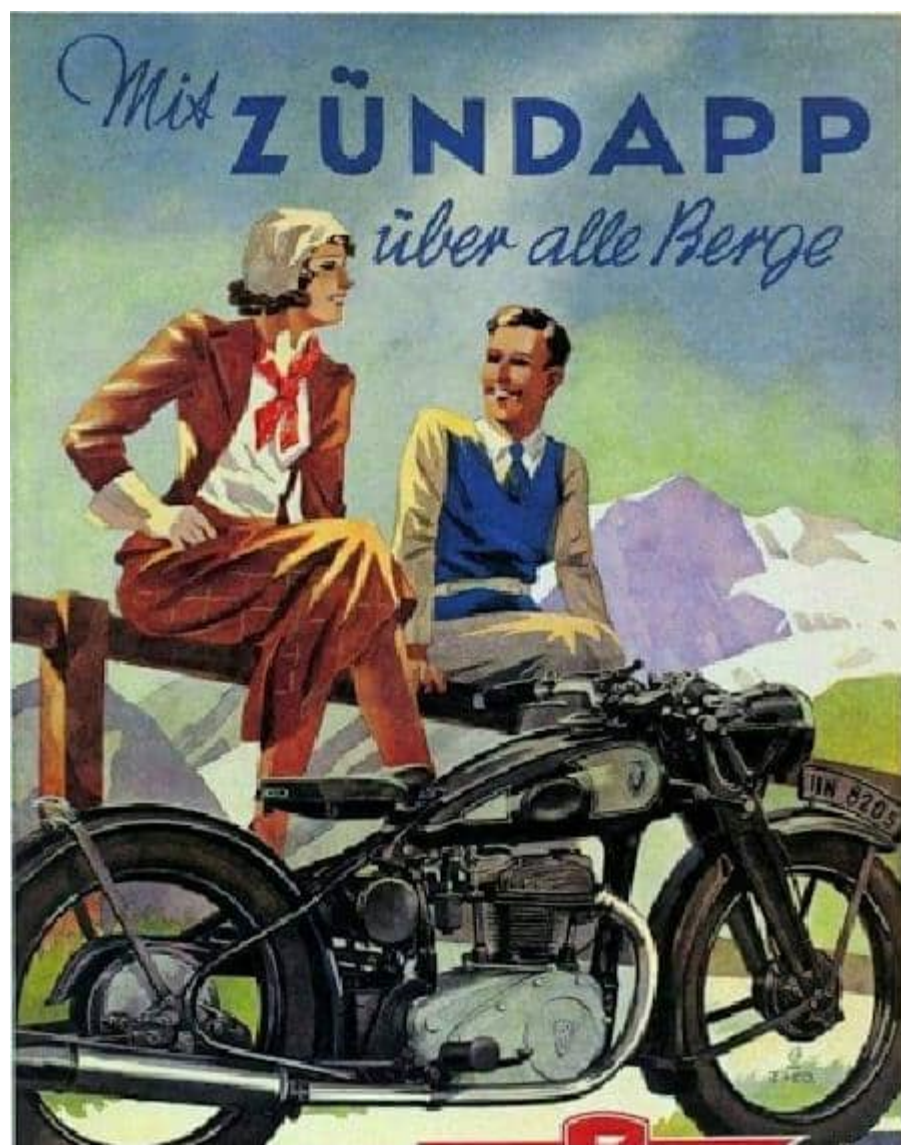
Bibendum rides! "Thanks to its side ribs the new Michelin motorcycle tyre is the most skid resistant."



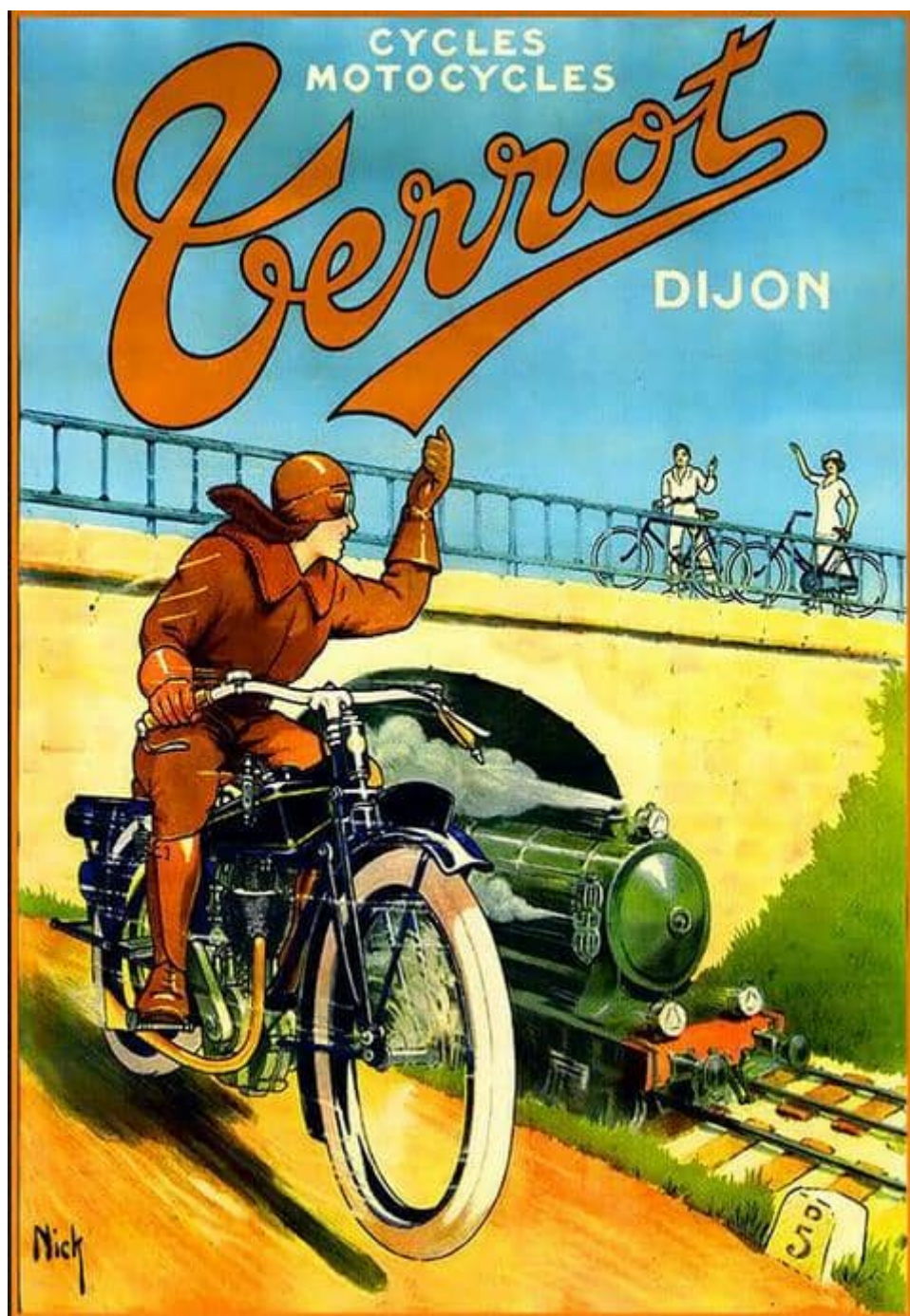
These Cottereau posters date from 1902-5. Tres jolie, n'est ce pas?

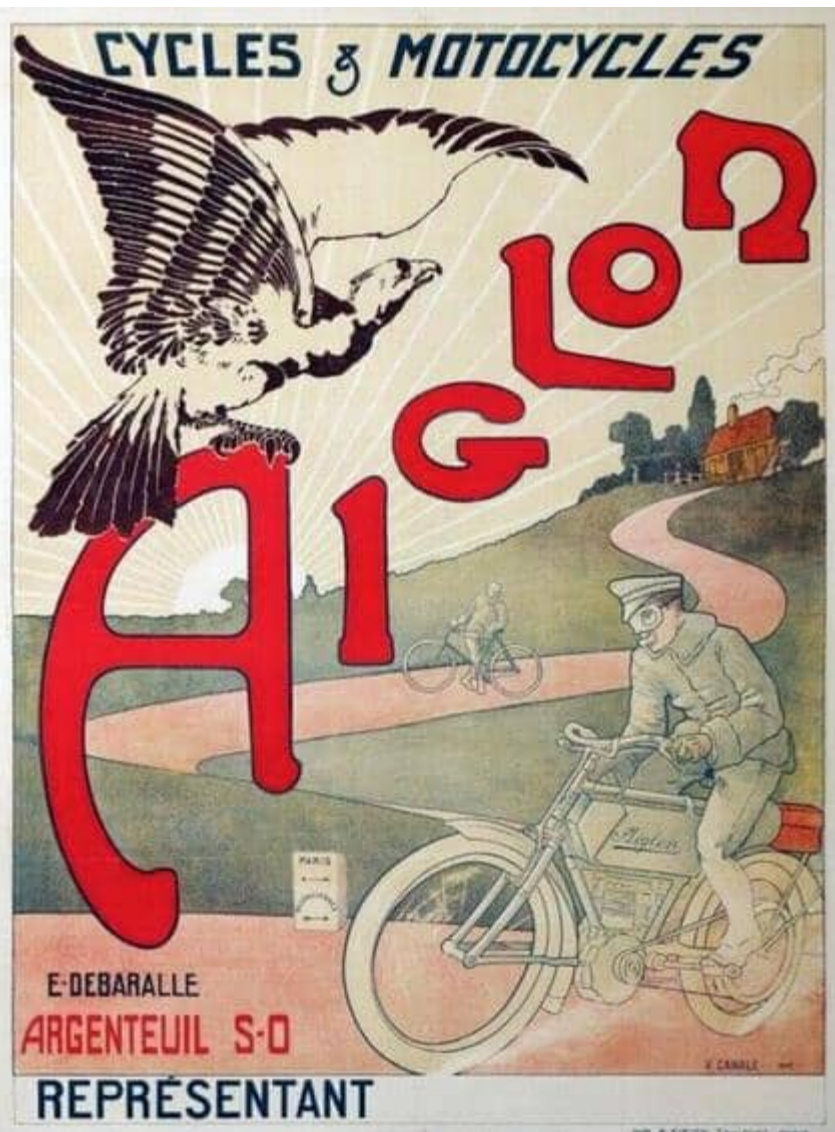















# BRADBURY

*Motor  
Cycle*




BRADBURY & CO.  
LIMITED,  
OLDHAM

"TAKES ANY  
GRADIENT"

EVER IN THE ASCENDANT!

# BRADBURY

PEERLESS MOTOR CYCLE



W.H. Hollis  
1902

SIMPLICITY, STRENGTH, SPEED, RELIABILITY.

BRADBURY & CO. LIMITED, WELLINGTON WORKS, OLDHAM



Fahren Sie **PRESTO**

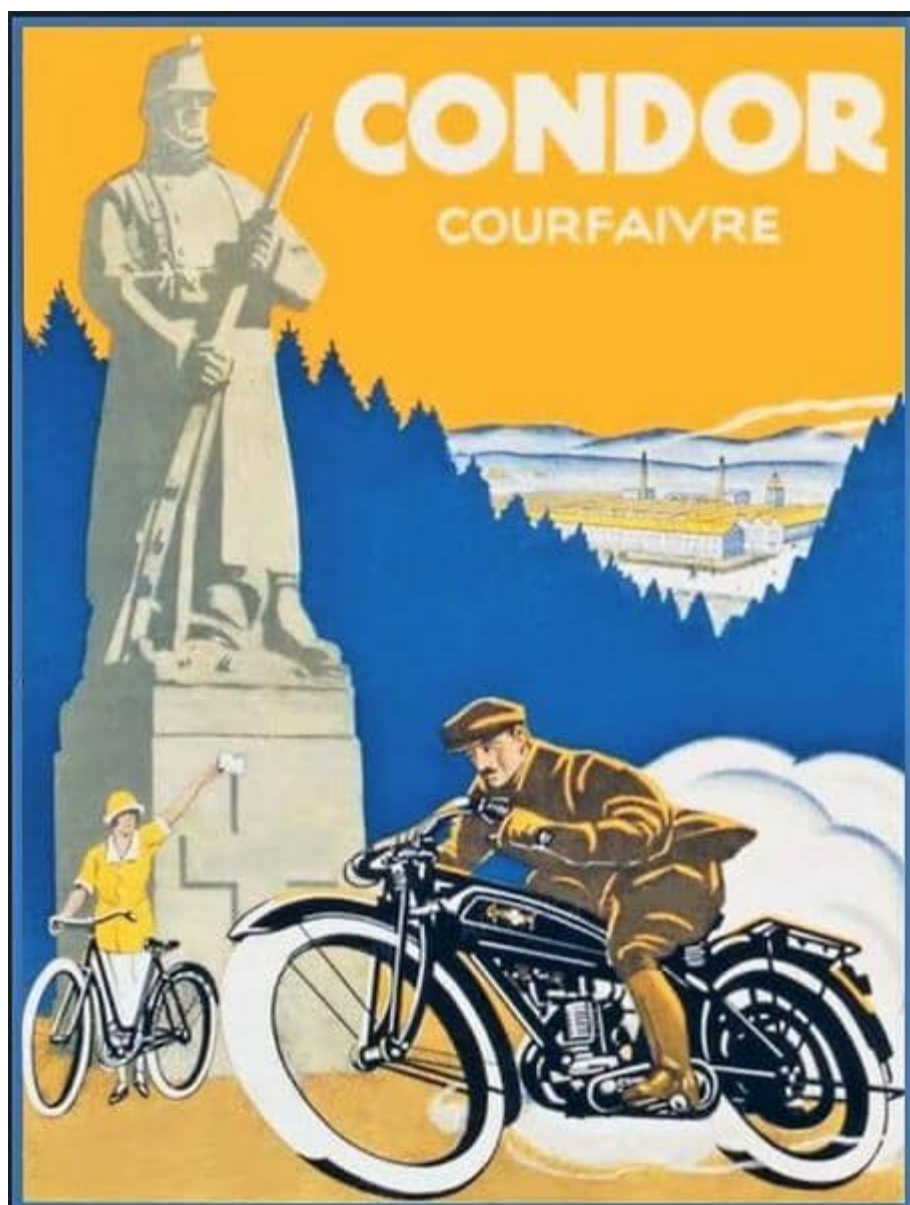
*Sie werden zufrieden sein!*



RU  
NA

FAHRRÄDER - MOTORFAHRRÄDER





A vintage advertisement for 'LA MOTO-RÊVE'. The top half features a colorful illustration of a man in a red suit riding a motorized bicycle on a dirt path, and another man in a blue shirt and hat standing in the foreground. The background shows a mountainous landscape with evergreen trees. The title 'LA MOTO-RÊVE' is written in large, stylized red letters at the top. Below the illustration, the text 'LA MOTO-RÊVE, GENÈVE' is prominently displayed. At the bottom, there are three small boxes containing technical specifications: 'POIDS 32 K', 'Bicyclette à Moteur léger, à 2 cylindres et à magnéto', and 'FORCE 2 HP'.

# LA MOTO-RÊVE

LA MOTO-RÊVE, GENÈVE

POIDS 32 K    Bicyclette à Moteur léger, à 2 cylindres et à magnéto    FORCE 2 HP











*Nimbus*

FABRIKERET AF

A/S FISKER & NIELSEN

PETER BANGSVEJ 30 KØBENHAVN F.

# MOTO ORIGAN

Huile **KERVOLINE**

Selle **PLANOR**

Pneus **DUNLOP**

Blocs-Moteurs **CHAISE**

Carburateur **LONGUEMARRE**

Bougies **GILARDONI**

Chaine **COVENTRY**

Guidon souple

**MASSON**

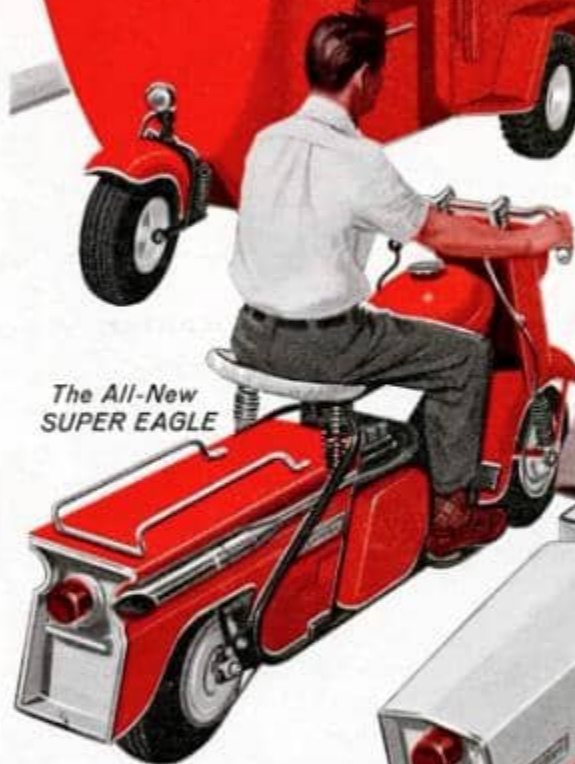


**GUILLER FRÈRES**, constructeurs. **FONTENAY-LE-COMTE**





*The 780  
TRUCKSTER.*



*The All-New  
SUPER EAGLE*



*The sleek  
PACEMAKER*

***Today's  
thriftiest  
transportation...***  
***CUSHMAN®***







# GALA PETER LE PREMIER DE TOUS LES CHOCOLATS AU LAIT



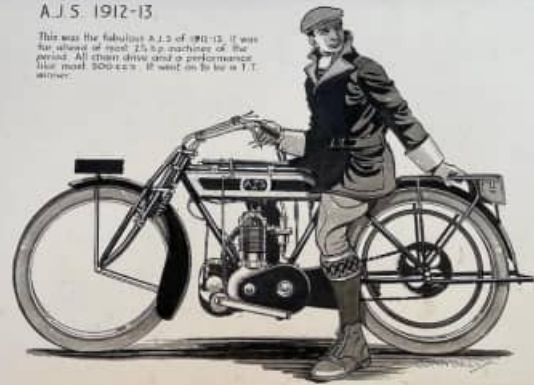
## CORONA 1922

This very little known machine had a most unusual springing system. The 443 cc engine was their own design with the then rare wetsump lubrication but the final belt drive was retained in spite of a quite advanced design throughout. It had a very large outside flywheel.



## A.J.S. 1912-13

This was the fabulous A.J.S. of 1912-13. It was far ahead of most 25 h.p. machines of the period. All chain drive and a performance that most 300 cc's. It went on to be a T.T. winner.





# SPORT *ou* TOURISME

*un seul Club*



1903



*Geo Ham*

## MOTOCYCLE CLUB DE FRANCE

73 . BOULEVARD PÉREIRE . PARIS XVII<sup>e</sup>

6-35. MODÈLE DÉPOSÉ

MAX. COURTRAU Imp. PARIS



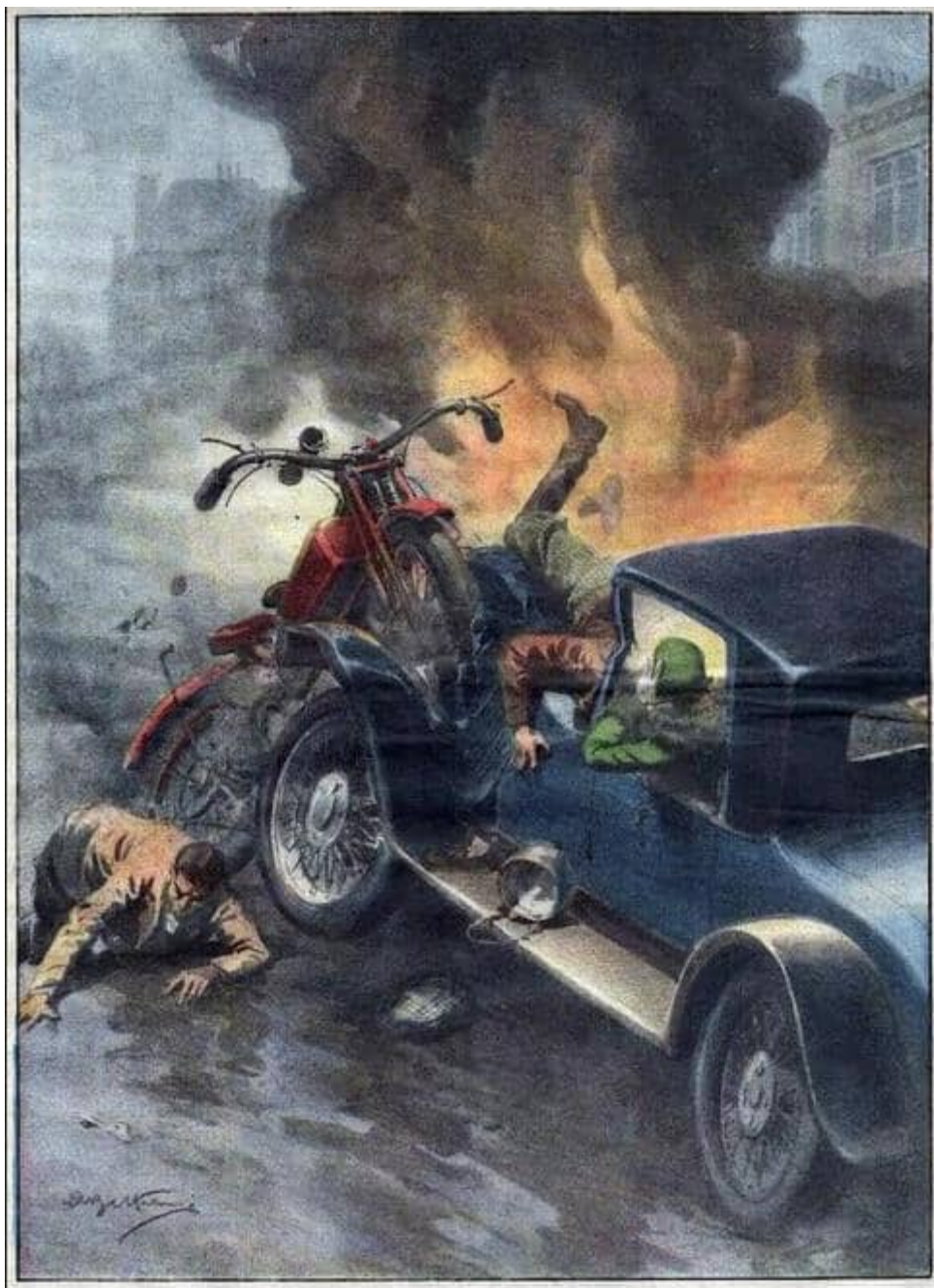
DECEMBER

Fifty miles an hour on an ingenious ice-cycle — See page 32

25 CENTS











The Bersaglieri are an elite unit of the Italian army dating back to 1836. Their dress uniform includes wide-brimmed hats decorated with black capercaillie feathers; these feathers are also applied to their combat helmets. Frera, as a supplier of motor cycles to the Italian army, depicted the Bersaglieri in some striking ads. Right: This fine illustration depicts a real event: “A motorcyclist on a forward scouting mission, who was under intense fire from the advancing enemy, persisted in his reconnaissance task until he and his comrade were severely hit. He fell to his death soon afterwards, but only mentioned his comrade’s wound so that he would be given priority in his care. A magnificent example of dedication to duty, military spirit and comradeship, to the point of supreme sacrifice. Pokrowskoje, Russian front, 11 August 1941.”



## ПО ХАРАКТЕРИСТИКЕ И НА ДЕЛЕ



The caption on the Great War postcard translates as: The force of habit: “Well, you gave me this envelope, what are you waiting for?” “Excuse me, Captain! I was waiting for the tip!” The card on the right, I’m told, hails from Slovenia. If a Slovenian reader happens to see this, I’d be glad to translate that tag line.





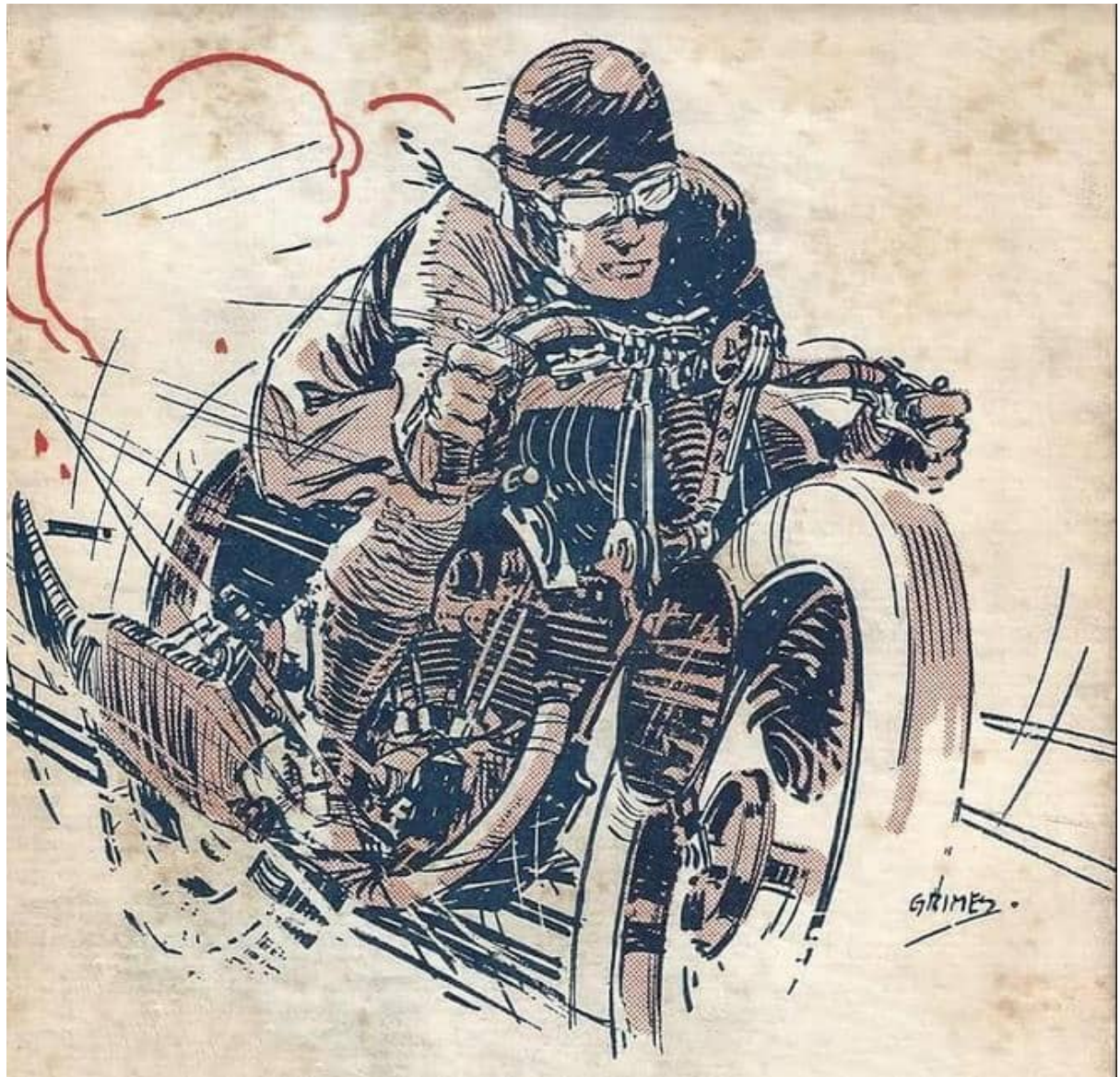
The line drawings probably originated in adverts. Charming, don't you think?



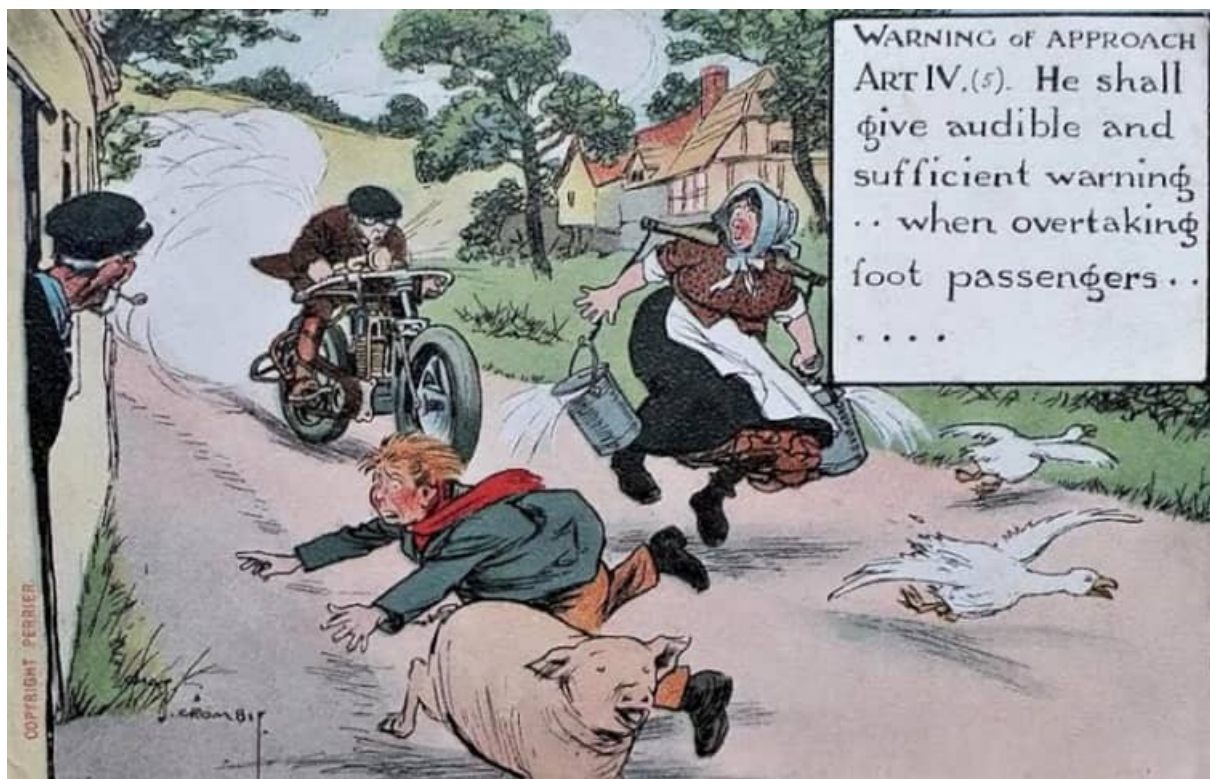
As the legend on the postcard reveals, the exquisite model combo and pram were made for a royal dolls house. There's posh.















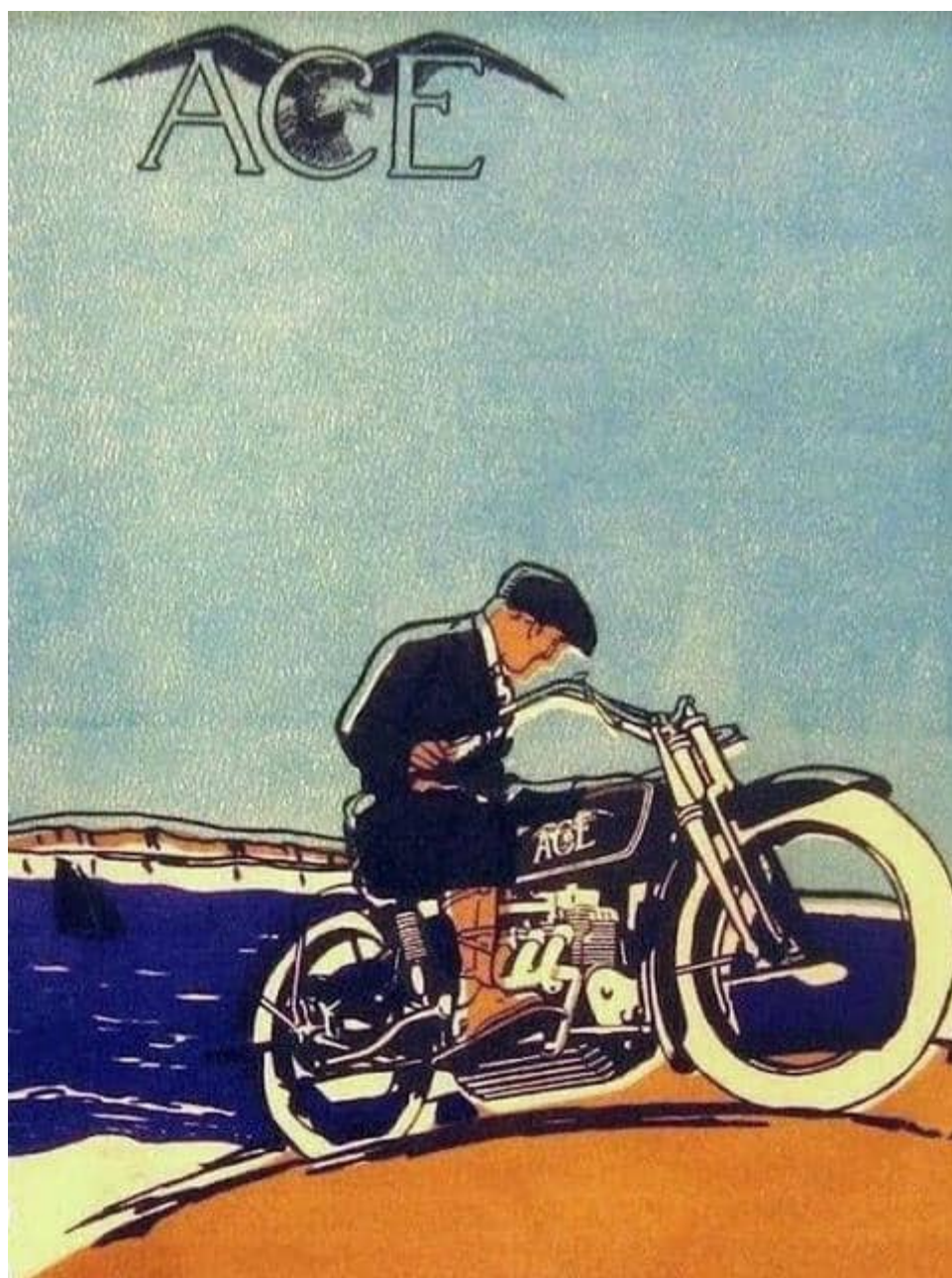




This illustration, by E Degert, dates from 1919.









English speakers have probably managed to translate “La police en side-car” for themselves. Caption on the left: “Well, what have you arrested?” “My motorcyclist...Sergeant!” Caption on the right: “And when they run someone over, who takes them to the station?” Hohoho.



POUR BIEN « SPORTER »

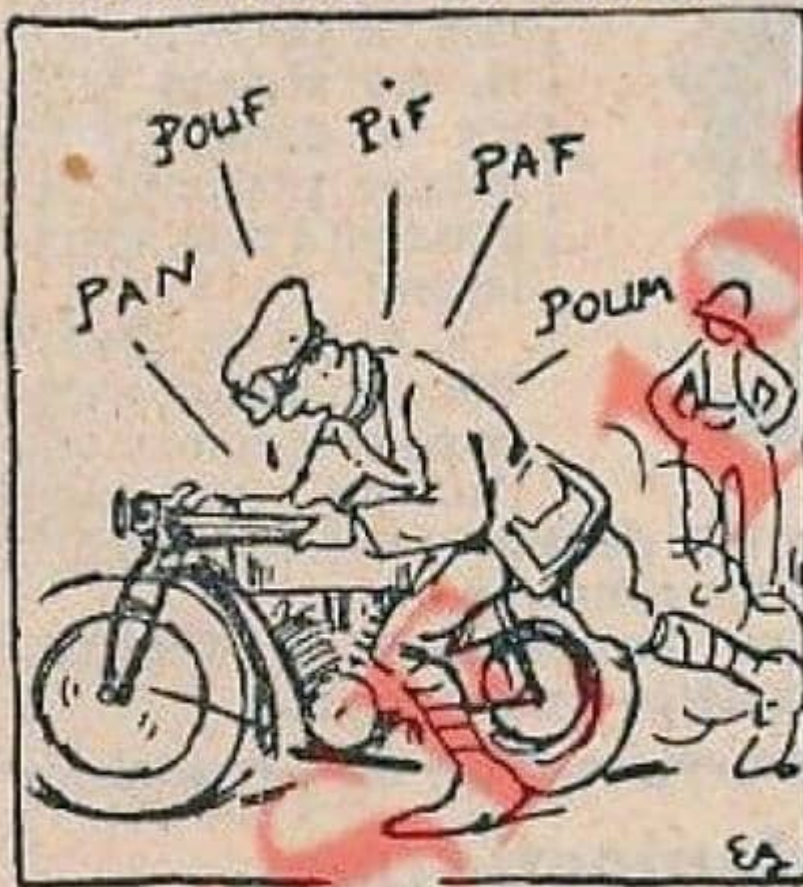


### LE SIDE-CAR

Est une bicyclette à laquelle on a d'abord joint un moteur, puis, pour maintenir l'instrument debout, on lui a adapté sur le côté une espèce de brouette qui peut servir à transporter sa belle-mère ou tout autre objet encombrant.

“For good ‘sport’—The sidecar...Is a bicycle to which an engine has been added, then, to keep it upright, a sort of wheelbarrow has been fitted to the side, which can be used to carry your mother-in-law or any other bulky object.”

POUR BIEN « SPORTER »

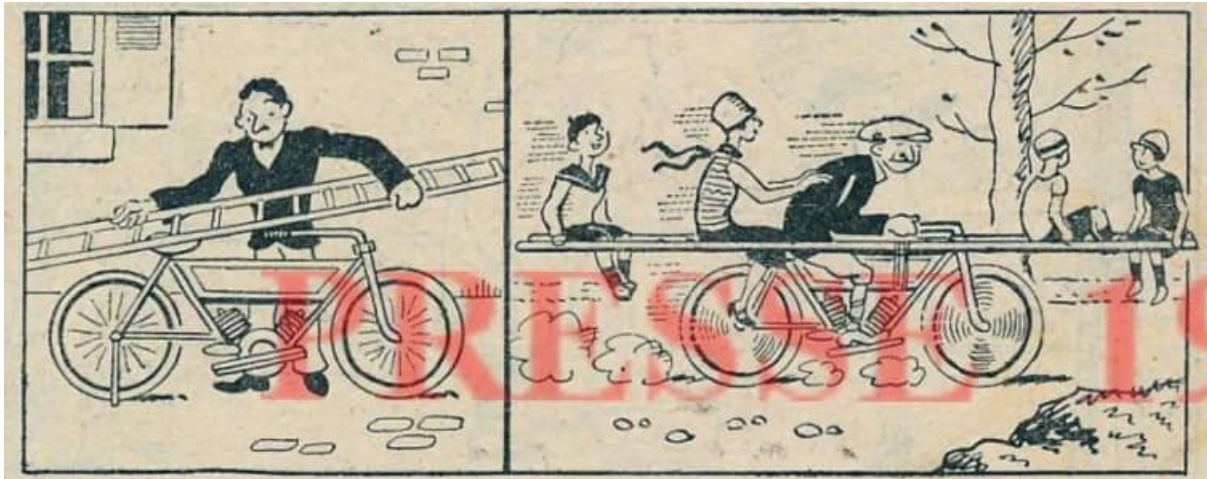


### LA MOTOCYCLETTE

Est une bicyclette que l'on a munie d'un moteur pour faire beaucoup de bruit et rester en panne. En ce cas, on peut laborieusement la pousser, le sport n'en est que plus complet.

“The motorcycle is a bicycle that has been fitted with a motor to make a lot of noise or to keep it running. In this case, it can be pushed laboriously, making the sport all the more enjoyable.”





An ingenious man. How, thanks to a ladder attached to his motorbike...Mr Lingenieux can take his wife and little family for a ride through the countryside!









*Moto-cycling*

*La douce promenade.  
A lovely ride*





# AEROSHELL

*Costituisce nel carter della vostra  
macchina una nuova ed eccezionale  
garanzia di sicurezza e regolarità*

# Cycle Brand



GROWN & PACKED BY  
**FILLMORE CITRUS FRUIT ASSN**

AT FILLMORE,  
VENTURA CO., CAL.

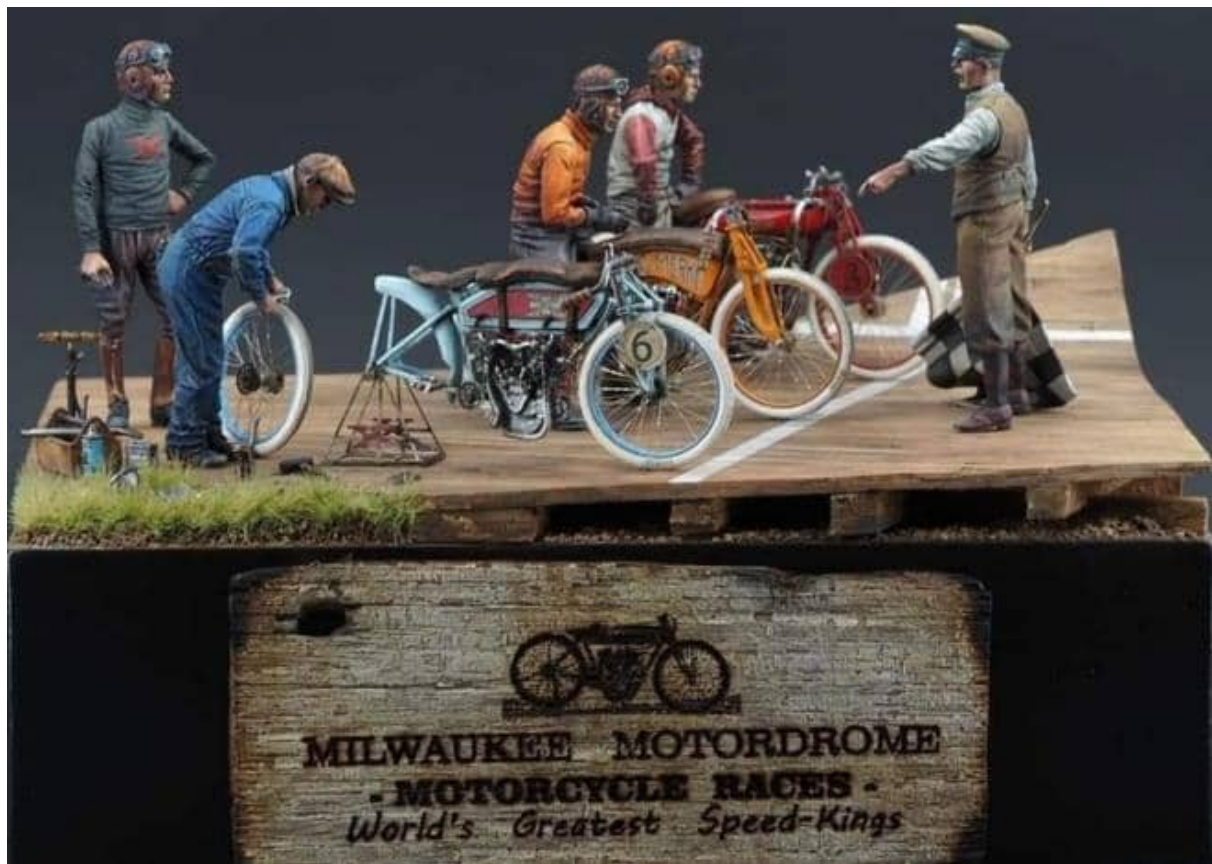






This Geiger cartoon was simply captioned "MC Hooligans".

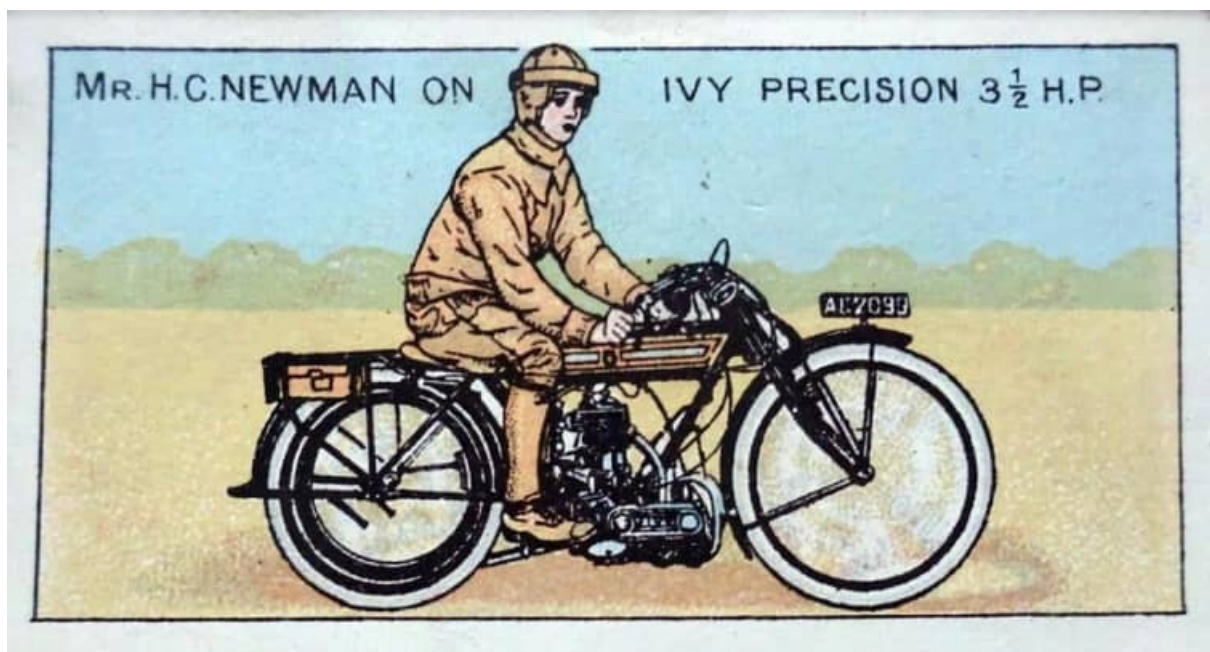






The tagline for the ad for Hutchinson motor cycle tyres translates as “solid as steel”.





Ivy Precisions were made by the Newman brothers; this is one of them.

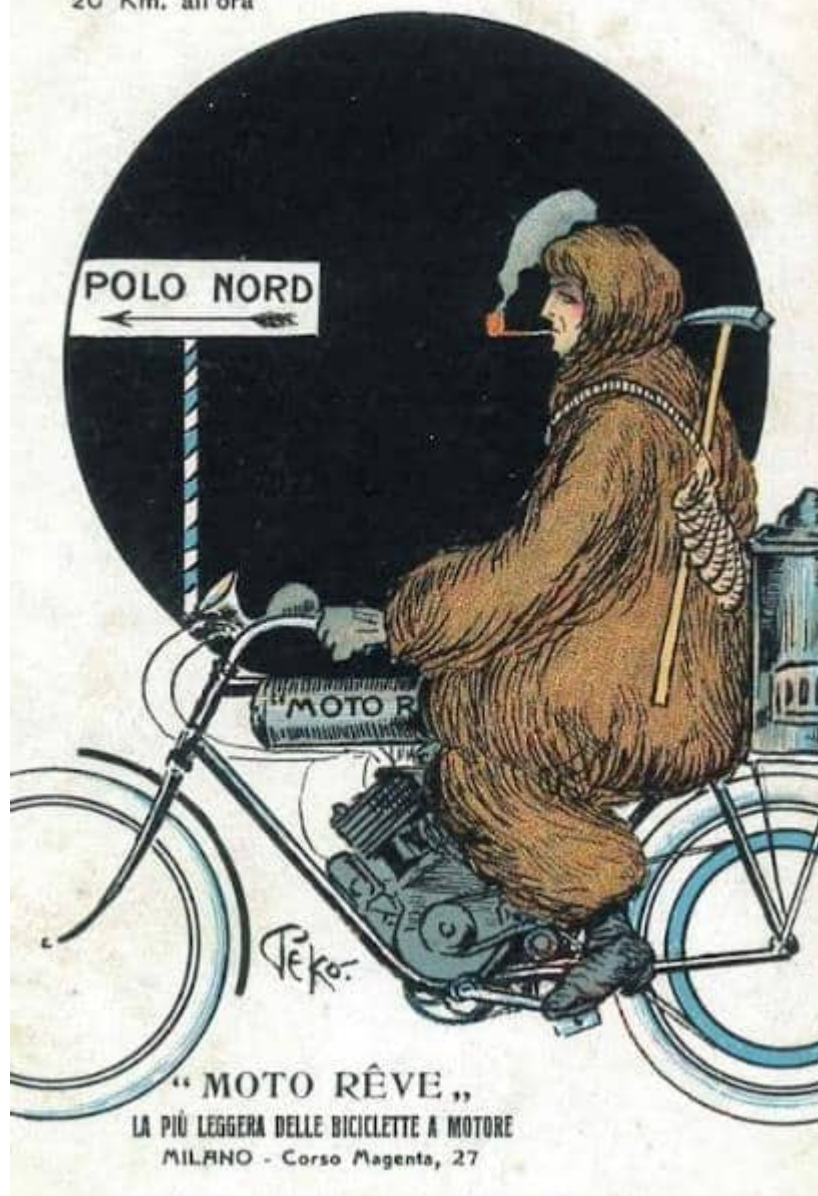
10 Km. all'ora



**“MOTO RÊVE”**  
LA PIÙ LEGGERA DELLE BICICLETTE A MOTORE  
MILANO - Corso Magenta, 27



20 Km. all'ora



“MOTO RÊVE,,

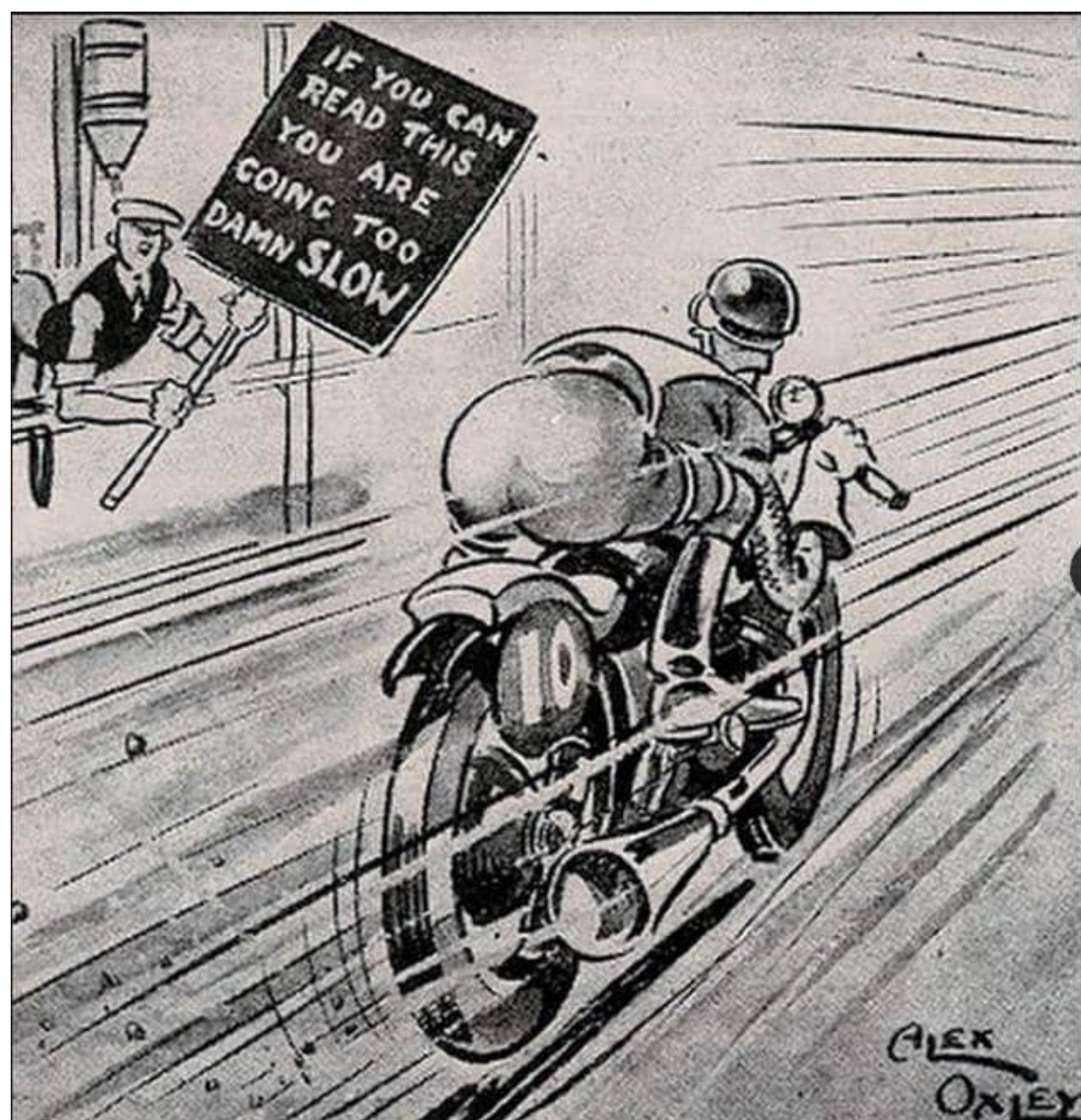
LA PIÙ LEGGERA DELLE BICICLETTE A MOTORE  
MILANO - Corso Magenta, 27



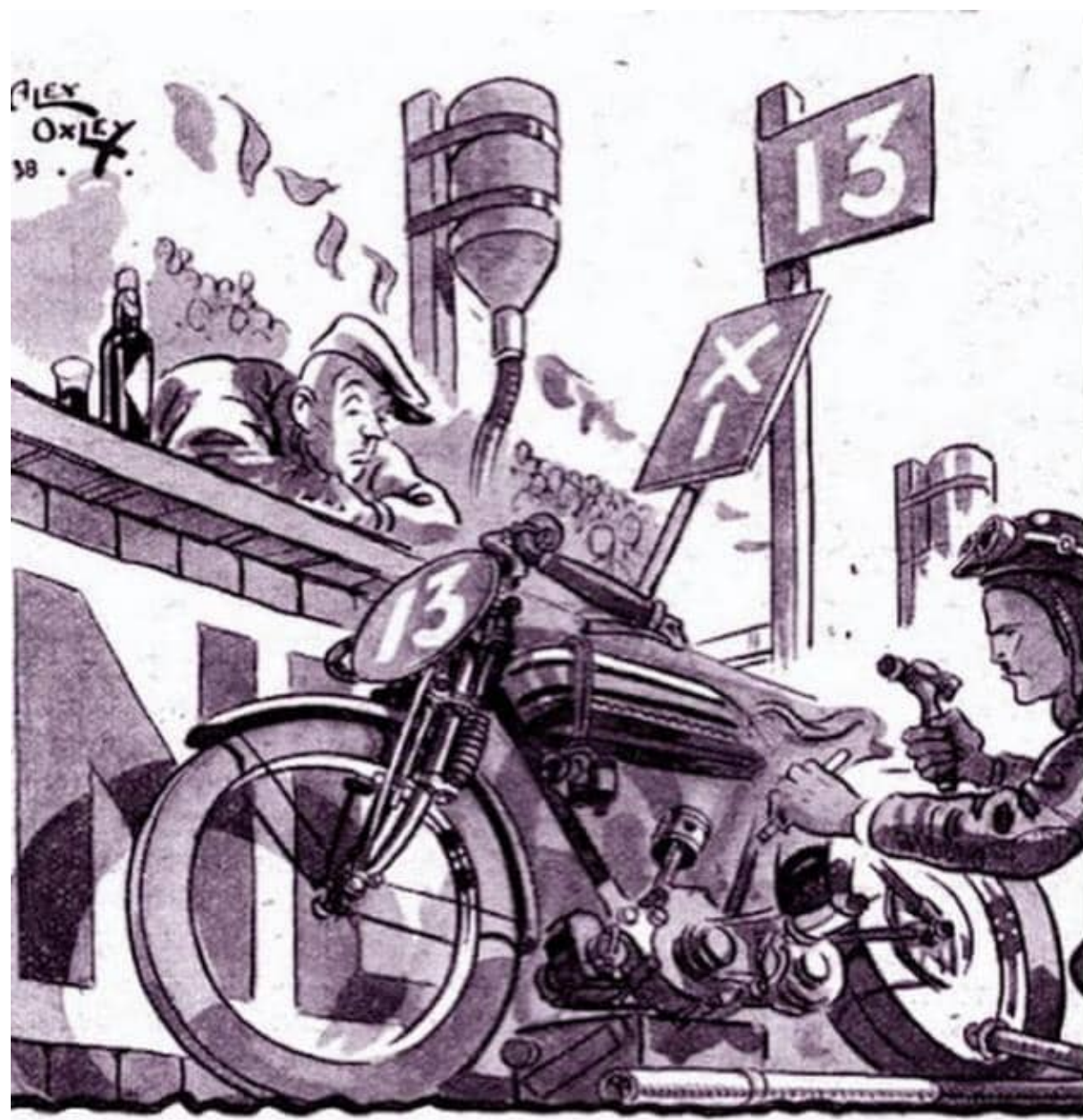
*For many years Alex Oxley's cartoons were a regular feature in The Motor Cycle; he also worked for other lesser magazines but a chap has to earn a living, and Triumph made good use of his talent in a series of adverts. Here's a delightful selection of Oxley's work.*







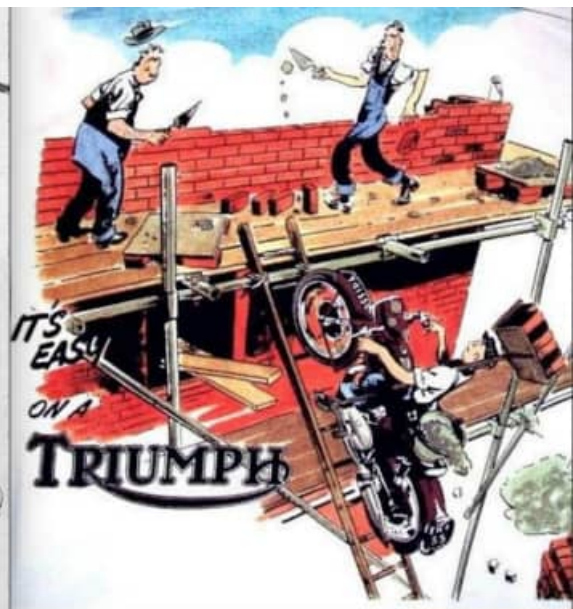




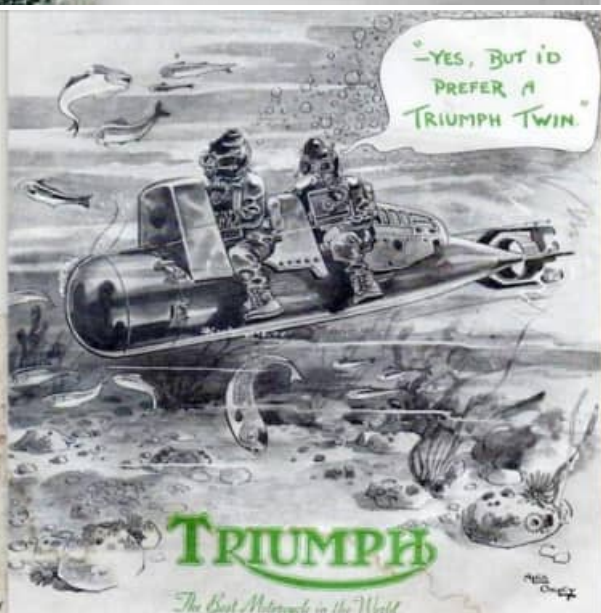
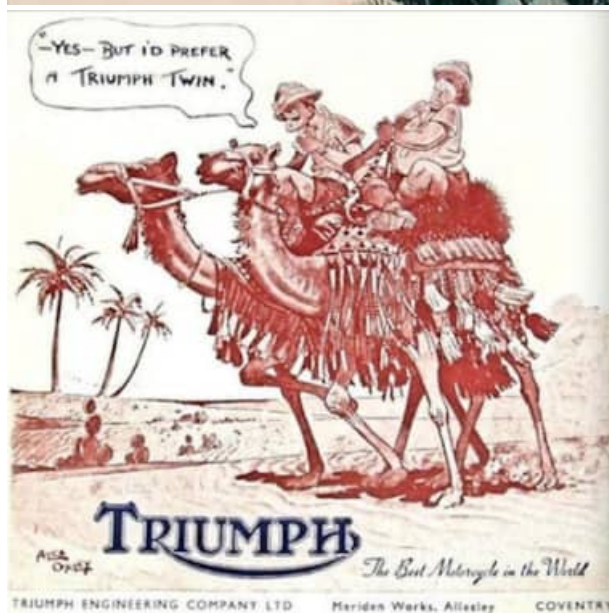












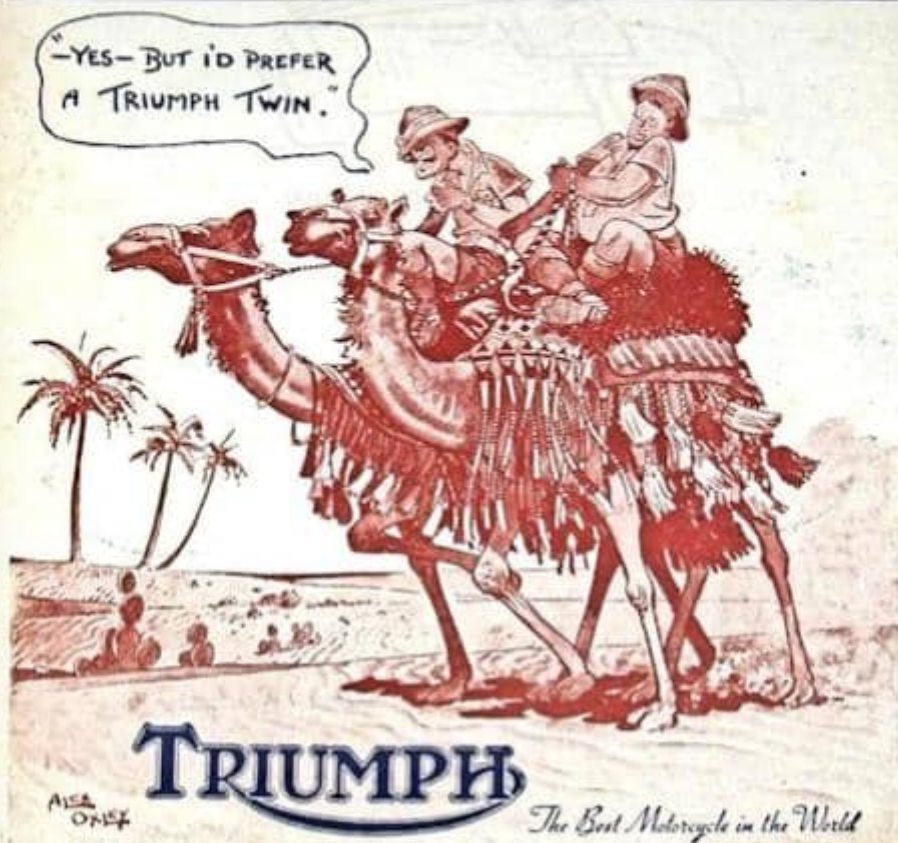
# THE MOTOR CYCLE

FOUNDED 1903

CIRCULATES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

No. 2287. Vol. 78

Thursday, February 6th, 1947



TRIUMPH ENGINEERING COMPANY LTD

Meriden Works, Allesley

COVENTRY

COPYRIGHT RESERVED AS A TRADEMARK FOR TRIUMPH IN THE UNITED KINGDOM  
ENTERED AS TRADEMARK AT THE NEW YORK U.S. PAT. OFFICE









IF YOU SEE A "3½"  
CLIMBING LIKE A "6"

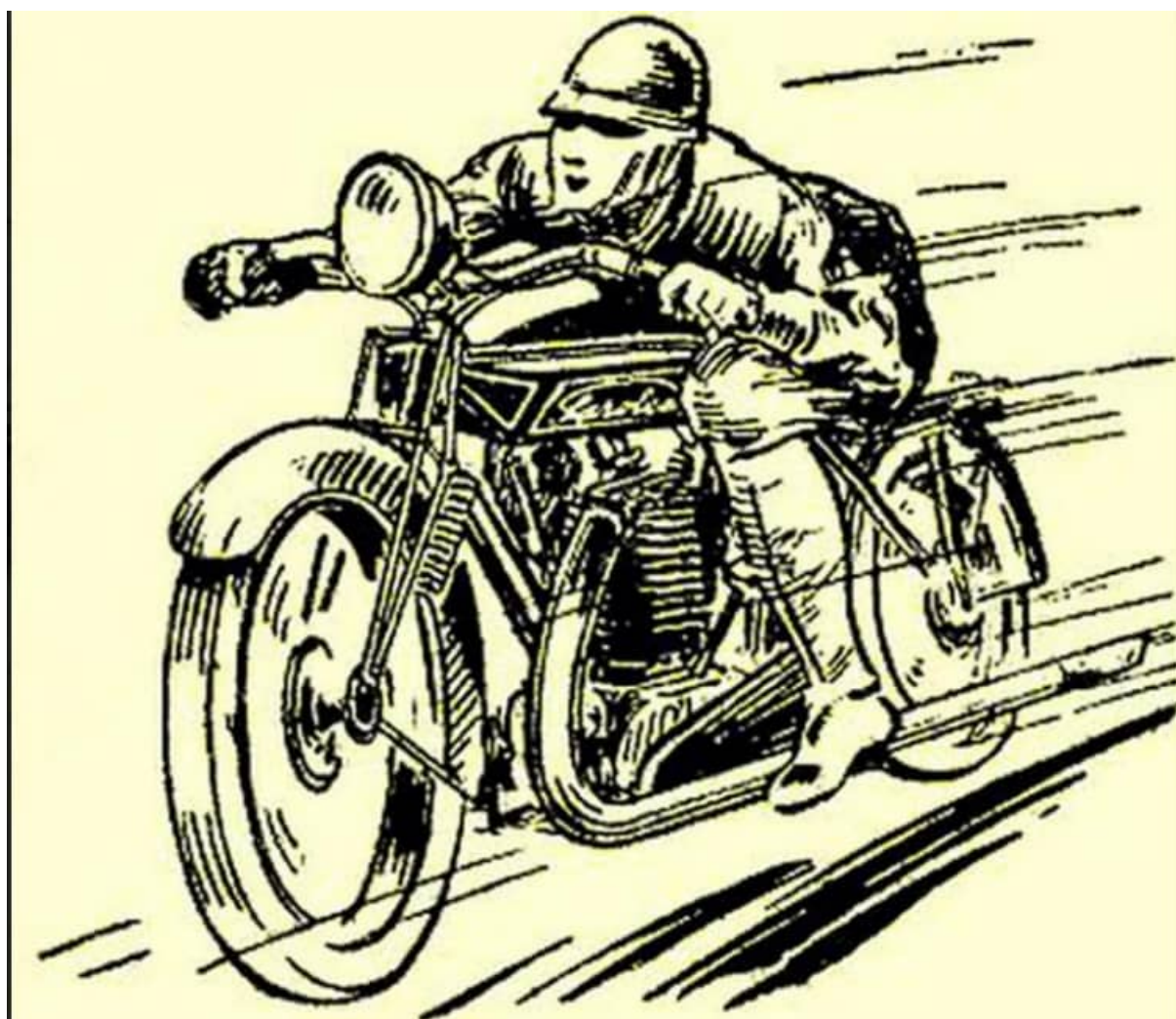


IT'S A  
**PREMIER**

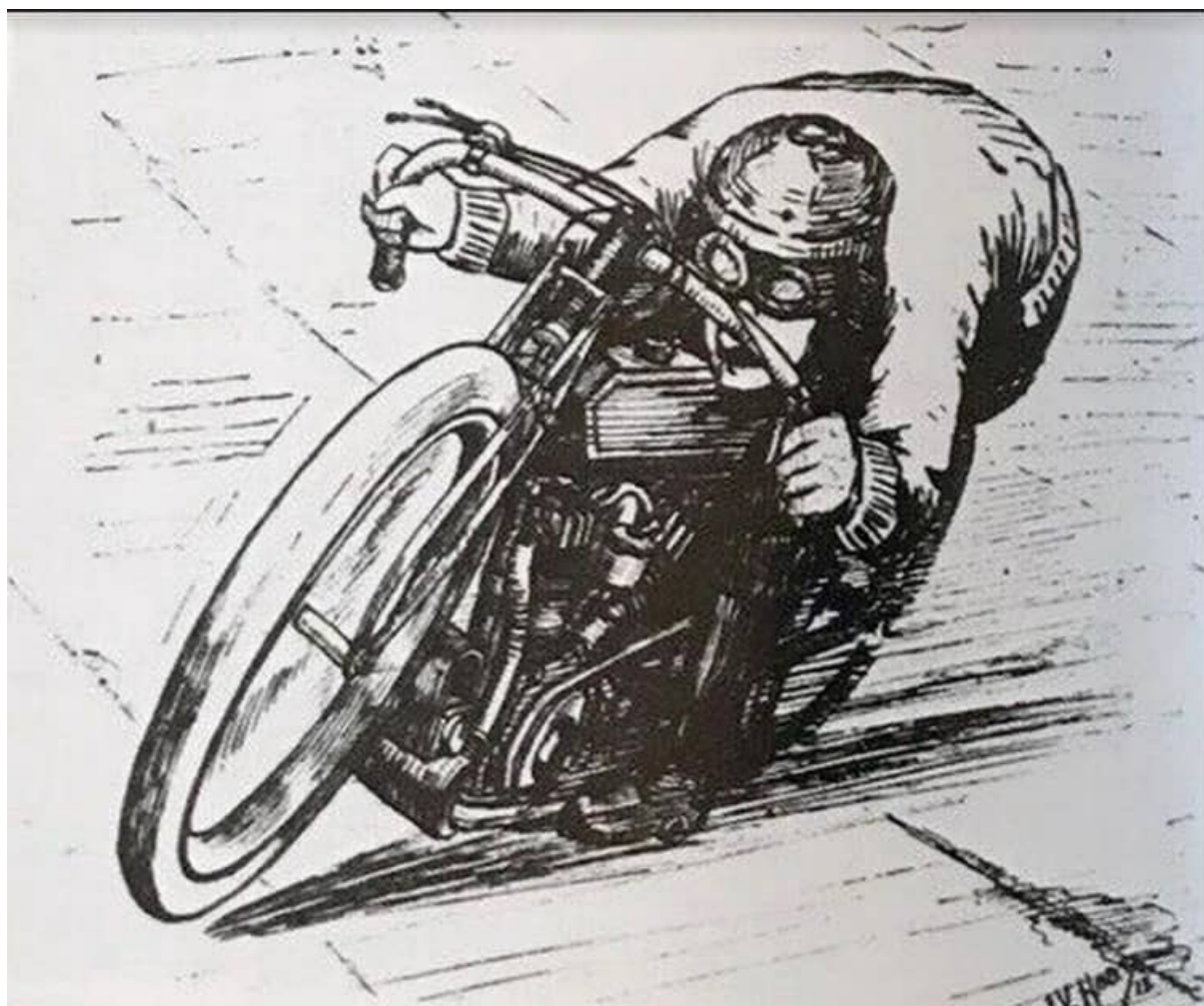


THE SPEED COP TANDEM

[The formation of a mobile section of the women police is suggested.]







la mieux étudiée!

Force · Confort · Souplesse

MOTOCYCLETTES

**Jean THOMANN**

PARIS

AGENT

Photographie et gravure de l'Éclair, 8 Rue, 5, Paris (1901)

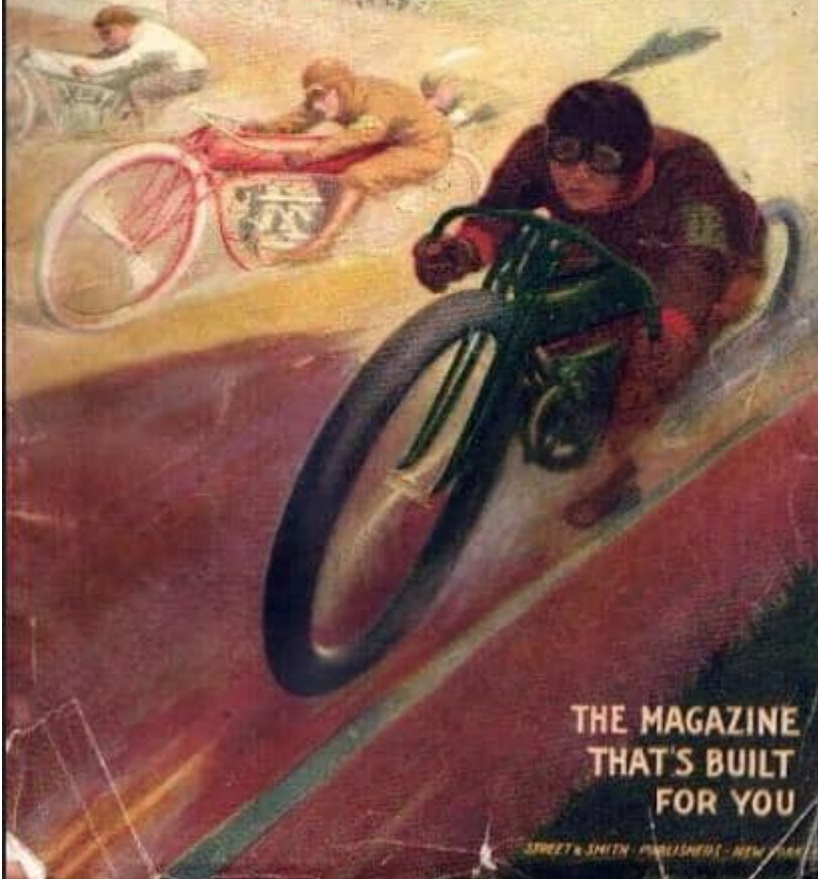


SEPT. FOURTEENTH

TWICE-A-MONTH

10 CTS.

# Top-Notch Magazine



THE MAGAZINE  
THAT'S BUILT  
FOR YOU

STREET & SMITH - PUBLISHERS - NEW YORK

Stürmische Fahrt!  
*Course mouvementée!*

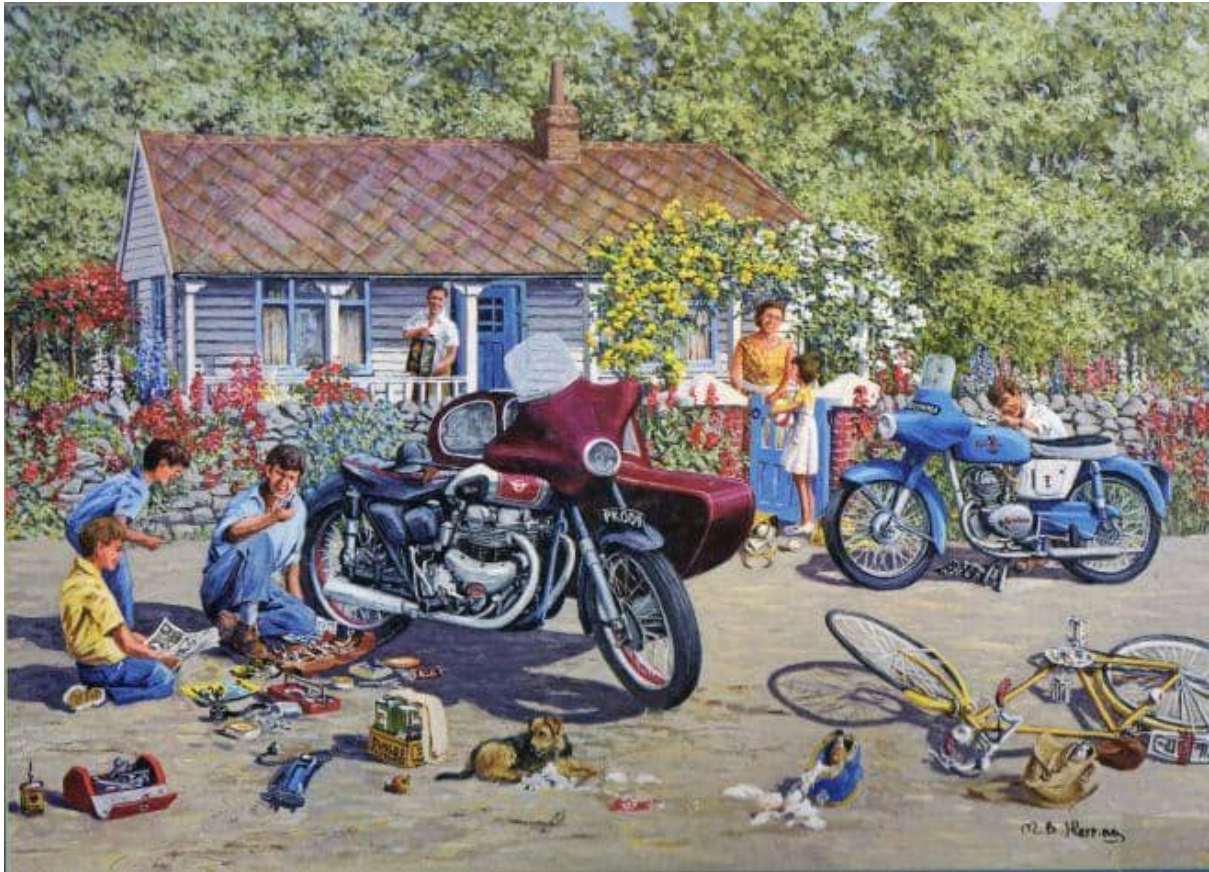






This smashing illustration is set at the 1934 TT.





Another charming image from the Island. My old mate Bill lives in this dream cottage which, he tells me, is a Swedish-made kit house from 1928. It inspired a local artist to paint it, and the painting inspired a jigsaw company to use the image in a puzzle.

And, if it happens to be that time of year...

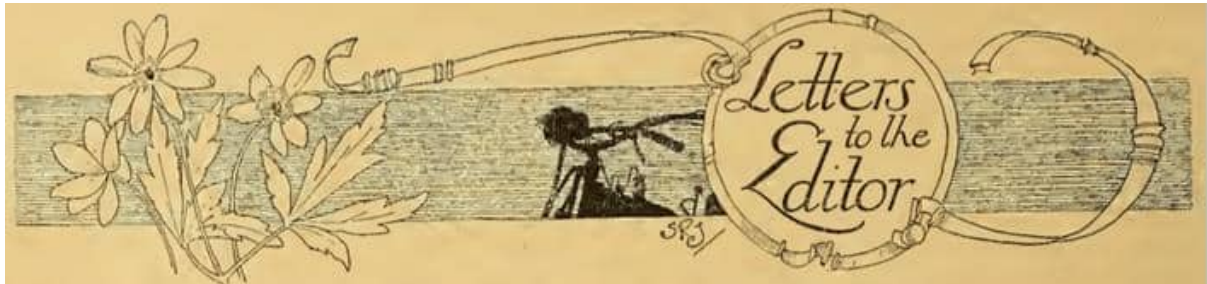






## Letters to the Editor

THIS SELECTION FROM the Blue 'Un's correspondence pages gives some fascinating insights into motor cycling in those golden years before the Great War.



"I WAS FILLING my generator the other night from one of these troughs, ladling the water with my hand, mind you, into a paper funnel, when one of these " unemployed ones " informed me that he would have to prosecute me for stealing water. I thought he was joking, but he pressed the case, and reminded me of the way the motor 'bus drivers polluted the water with their oily cans. I granted that this was a disgraceful trick, and pointed out the way I was proceeding, but he said this would make no difference. At last I reminded the man in blue that he would be laughed at in any police court when the matter was explained, whereupon he decided to say no more about it 'this time'."

**Fred Trigg**

"MAY WE TRESPASS on your space to contradict a rumour which we have heard persistently of late to the effect that we intend marketing a 5 or 7hp twin motor bicycle. We cannot imagine what has given rise to this rumour, unless it is that our 500cc single-cylinder engine has developed over 8hp at 3,000 revolutions.

**John V Pugh, Rudge-Whitworth Ltd**

"IN VIEW OF THE agitation that exists at the present moment against noisy motor cycles, and feeling that the abuse of the cut-out by a certain class of irresponsible motor cyclists is bound to increase this agitation, we have decided to supply our Indian motor cycles in future with the foot lever which operates the cut-out fitted to our silencer entirely removed. We have found from experience that the opening of the cut-out does not materially increase the speed or help the running of our standard touring machines in any way whatever. In fact, we are quite convinced that the long, tapered exhaust pipe which we fit on to our silencer, and which extends well towards the rear of the machine, instead of retarding, tends to improve the running of the engine, inasmuch as it apparently creates a vacuum in the silencer."

**The Hendee Manufacturing Co**

IN CONSEQUENCE of the coal strike, a large number of trains in various parts of the country were suspended, and nowhere was this more so than in the Manchester district. As a result, the morning mails from Manchester to Glazebury and Kenyon were interfered with, and as no coaches run in the direction of these places the mails had to



circulate via Leigh; at this point the mails were met by the Brothers Timms with their motor cycle and sidecar and conveyed to their destination.

### **F Timms**



The brothers Timms used their combo to carry the mail from Manchester to Glazebury during the coal strike. Motor cycles were also carrying mail in Coventry, where the Post Master had a Humber on a 12-month trial.



Coventry posties

got motorbikes, lucky chaps.

“YOU MENTION several ‘Clean Counties’ in which no police traps have been worked during 1911. I would point out to you that the county of Durham should be included in this list. Such a thing as a police trap is not known in this county, and I shall be pleased if you will mention this fact in your next issue.”

**WT Walton Jnr**

**Hon Sec Harlepool & DMCC**

“...IF PERMISSION for the [TT] race is refused, the fault will not lie with the Manx authorities or the Manx people, but with the ACU, who know full well the amount of misbehaviour of some of the competitors here in June last, and the way their conduct was annoying—and rightly so—to the people in the island, and neither the ACU nor its Secretary took any steps whatever to stop such proceedings, and “although they had before them the names of some of the competitors who were the cause of all this trouble, the ACU did not either censure or disqualify them from any of the competitions. If the races are to take place in the Isle of Man this year—and Manx people, after all, are



sportsmen—it will only be on such conditions as will give the Manx authorities power to prevent such disgraceful proceedings taking place as took place here in June last.”

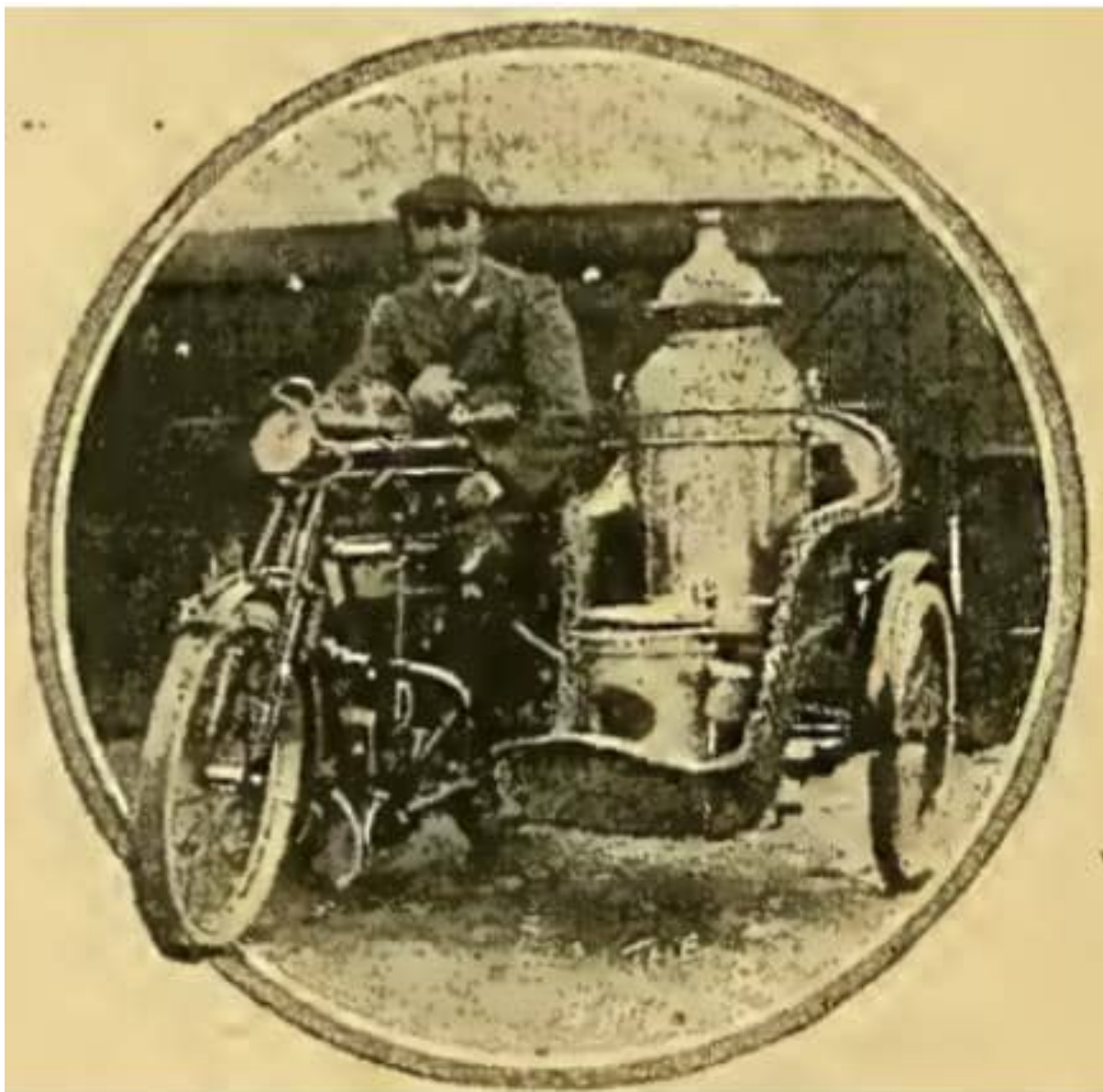
**George JA Brown**

“THEORY IS NOT of much use in dealing with a practical question which must be decided by practical tests. Of course, anyone who has driven both a three-wheeler and a four-wheeler (and the best of each kind) is entitled to give his opinion—which will differ from the opinions of some other riders. But, for those who have not that practical experience, the following facts may be more useful than theories: (1) A three-wheeler won very easily the only cyclecar race yet held, at a speed of about 59mph. The three-wheeler was, in fact, ‘first, and the rest nowhere’. (2) At this speed the three-wheeler was absolutely steady, whereas the only four-wheeler which approached it ‘snaked’ badly and finally turned turtle. (3) No four-wheeler has, as yet, got through an official long distance reliability trial, open to both three and four-wheelers, whereas a three-wheeler has been consistently successful in these trials. (4) So far no three-wheeler with single front steering wheel has entered for any official trial. I may add that I was all in favour of four wheels until I was converted by experience. “

**H George Morgan**

“I RESPECTFULLY wish to bring to your notice the fact of motor cyclists riding at excessive and dangerous speeds through this borough. No doubt you are aware the roads in and about Leamington are wide, well laid, and offer every inducement for motorists’ comfortable travelling. In addition to this, the local police authorities have laid themselves out to induce motorists to visit this town, without fear of running into any specially laid traps (a practice which I consider totally unworthy of any police authority to recognise). Notwithstanding this, I am sorry to say that a great many motor cyclists who visit this town have no regard for the safety of other people, but go racing through some of our principal streets at speeds varying from 18 to 30mph. My Watch Committee have had the matter under consideration, and have been forced to the conclusion that the police must take more drastic action with a view of bringing some of the offenders before the justices. I do not know how far you can help me in this matter, but I should be glad if you could intimate through The Motor Cycle in a friendly way a caution to motor cyclists to exercise a little more care with regard to excessive speed when passing through this town, and to take this warning in the spirit in which it is given, and so obviate the necessity of any police proceedings.”

**TT Earnshaw, Chief Constable**



Before there were tradesman's outfits you could always stick a churn in a wickerwork sidecar.

ENCLOSED IS A photograph showing the utility of the motor cycle. The owner, Mr Edwards, of Kington, Herefordshire, has been using the 3½hp two-speed Humber and sidecar for the purposes of delivering milk daily. By this means he is able to dispense with a horse and trap, which would otherwise be required.

**EM Turner**

I AM WRITING in the hope that you will find room for the following statement in regard to the facts leading up to my disqualification in the standard single-cylinder class at the hill climb recently held by the Harrogate and District and Herts County MCCs. It will be remembered that I won in this class, making the climb in 63.2sec. I rode the same machine which I have used throughout the whole of last year, the present season, and also during the winter; it is a strictly standard Ivy machine, and I think I can claim to



have been almost religiously careful with regard to its equipment. I have invariably ridden the machine with ordinary up-turned handle-bars, footboards, shield for the magneto, mudguards, tool bags, the machine being, in fact, an exact replica of a standard Ivy. These facts were duly pointed out to the officials, but the only satisfaction I got was a statement to the effect that no ordinary touring engine could climb the hill in the time that I took, so that, presumably, had I made this climb at a slower speed, I could still have won and not have suffered the indignity of disqualification. I now wish to state that the engine was a standard competition Ivy-Precision engine, and that it does not vary in the slightest degree from those fitted to the machines we sell, except in so far that it has seen a good deal more work than most. It seems to me distinctly unfair ruling that a rider should lose the result of his care and experience because of efficiency which is apparently above the normal.

**HC Newman**

I NOTICE A paragraph in your issue of last week referring to the clashing of the passenger trial arranged by my club—the North-West London MCC—with that organised by the Birmingham Club. This unfortunate clashing was not in any way due to my committee, as the original date of the fixture was settled at the meeting of secretaries at Olympia [in November 1911]. We have always made a point of avoiding interfering with other clubs' affairs as much as possible, and when, in spite of the date being approved at this meeting, another club fixed a trial for the same day, we applied in January to the ACU to have our date altered to May 18th, which, at that time, was an entirely open date. The permit was granted to my club quite a long time ago, and I trust you will make this clear so that the Birmingham Club will not feel that we have intentionally arranged anything which would be likely to interfere with the success of their own competition in regard to which we wish them the best results. It seems to me that some arrangement might be made in regard to protecting the interests of clubs in such matters. The meeting of secretaries at the Olympia was intended for this purpose, but, judging by what transpires each year, very few feel morally bound by the arrangements.

**HJ Pooley,**

**Captain North-West London MCC**

**'EM' (BRIGHTON)** wishes to secure a companion for a long Continental motor cycle trip this year to Japan via Siberia, returning the same route or a different one. Letters addressed as above, c/o The Editor, will be forwarded to the right quarter.



CW Mayer and his 3½hp Humber sidecar.

I PURCHASED A 1911 model two-speed Humber motor cycle at Whitsun last year and have had no mechanical troubles since, although I have done over 3,000 miles in this neighbourhood, mostly with a sidrcar (not by any means a flat countiy, as you know), including one or two) long tours, namely, via Lyme Regis and the coast road to Bouruemouth, Southsea, Brighton and back. On this occasion my brother accompanied me, and we took enough luggage for a fortnight's holiday. Some months ago I had the engine down and what little carbon there was was removed, and, as an example of Humber reliability and the power developed by their 3½hp engine, I am pleased to say that recently I climbed Haldon Hill with a passenger eleven stones and myself twelve and a half stones, total weight all up over 6cwt. The engine is geared 4½ to 1 on top and 9 to 1 on bottom.

**Charles W Mayer**



DURING THE LIVERPOOL Auto Cycle Club trial it was my duty as a marshal to stop all the competitors at the approach to Cilcain Hill, and to send them up singly. During my wait there I was approached by the constable placed on the hill and informed that he had heard rumours of a plot by certain members of a chapel congregation in the vicinity to drive a horse and cart down the hill in order to baulk all the competitors on the hill, in spite of the fact that we had made arrangements to send them up separately, to cause no obstruction. Now a cart did turn up, and got in the way of Miss Baxter and others, and just as it was passing me the driver lashed out with his whip, intentionally striking Mr Pollard across the shoulders. I was just going to run after the cart, and obtain the name and address of the driver, when seven or eight competitors turned up, and, as I had no assistance, I was unable to leave my post, but several of the competitors saw the man's action; which I think most dastardly. If any reader of your paper who happens to be driving through the district and meets with similar treatment will communicate with me, I will see that the matter is placed in the proper quarter to have a stop put to it.

Lionel C Barton,

**Vice-president, Liverpool ACC**

“OPPOSITE MY HOUSE is a meadow used as a cricket ground by a large local school ‘for the sons of gentlemen’. As the field is not wide enough balls are constantly driven over the road into the opposite property. During previous seasons damage has constantly been done to gardens, windows, and tilings inside rooms, and several people have been hit and injured. One evening recently, as I was riding at about 15mph, a ball came across the road right under my front wheel, bringing me down. I suffered several painful cuts and bruises, beside considerably tearing my overalls and clothes. Lamp and horn were smashed and machine itself considerably damaged, and engine injured, necessitating partial taking down. The headmaster later expressed regret and thought, perhaps, he was morally responsible, but had doubts about being legally so. I propose to hand him the repairer's estimate and ask him to settle with me personally at once.”

**SR**

THE DANGER OF Uncontrolled Dogs: Every week scores of riders get thrown from their machines, with more or less serious injury to themselves or their machines, more often both, and yet this danger on the highway goes on and seems to get worse than ever. I have been laid up in bed for months at a time from this cause, and am deaf in one ear as the result of one of the falls; only a month back I was thrown in Chalfont St. Peter; result damage to machine to the value of £5 and slight personal injuries. I think I got off luckily. Why should we be in this perpetual danger from an uncontrolled animal on the highway?

**FW Applebee**

ON MY ARRIVAL home the other night, after riding from Holborn, via Hanwell and Staines, I was astonished to find a boy's cap lying on my footboard, within an inch of the

driving chain. It had evidently been thrown at the machine in the dark, as I had not notice anything en route. Had this cap moved another inch, it would have been caught up by the chains, and a bad smash to myself and machine would have been the probable result. Could not the AA or ACU circularise head teachers of schools, asking them to point out to the children the dangers of this cap-throwing habit? I generally stop and 'go for' the children myself when I see a cap thrown.

**Enquirer**

IN THE ACCOUNTS of the various trials one sees frequent mention of tyre troubles owing to punctures, while in other parts of your paper one reads accounts of non-puncturable tyres, covers, bands, etc, besides solutions and powders which immediately stop any puncture. Is it because riders do not use these articles or because they do not fulfill all that their makers claim?

**Verator**



“An accident risked to settle a wager.”

A FEW WEEKS ago, after an argument with a friend, a wager was made that I would not succeed in carrying six persons on a standard motor cycle for three miles; this I did, and afterwards I tried with seven, and I succeeded in carrying this load (an aggregate weight of nearly half a ton) for a distance of two and a half miles on my 3½hp Armstrong James, the last mile being to Stonebridge, where I delivered the load safely, demonstrating the



fact that a modern motor cycle is capable of standing an enormous load.

**Albert Milner**

AT MANNINGTREE (ESSEX) on the 20th inst, a motor cyclist was fined four guineas and costs, and also had his licence endorsed, for riding his machine up a wide steep hill at 30mph. The rider was a most careful individual, and it was the first time he had fallen foul of the police. At the same court, a barman, who had stolen many pounds, and candidly admitted it, was bound over to be of good behaviour for twelve months. Is this justice? Anyway, motor cyclists have means of at least showing their objection to such methods by taking out their motor cycle licences elsewhere. [At this time vehicles could be registered in any county. This allowed the acquisition of low numbers for them 'as wanted them but also allowed vehicle owners to pay their fees where they wished].

**J Tippins**

FIFTEEN MILES WITH a Broken Valve: The other day I was out for a run on an old 3½ Rex when the stem of my exhaust valve broke, leaving about an inch and a quarter between it and the tappet. I had no tools except an adjustable, spanner, with which I changed over the valves. The inlet now became automatic, and by taking rubber tube from generator, pushing one end of it up on valve stem, which it fitted tightly, and tying it around the contact breaker cover, I extemporised an inlet spring. The machine, being warm, started easily, and I did fifteen miles in an hour and a quarter. Perhaps the tip may save some of your readers a weary push of many miles.

**William A Ryan Jnr**

THE DANGER OF Uncontrolled Dogs: In this country, where the dog tax is less than in England, only 2s per dog, and 6d for stamp, these curs constitute a regular reign of terror for motor cyclists. A short time ago I was driving my nearly new triumph about 15mph up a slight hill, when a large sheep dog suddenly jumped out of a hedge and charged my front wheel. I was smashed down, and lay with my right thigh pinned between the tank and the ground. Front wheel was so badly buckled that a new one was necessary, and four spokes and cyclometer broken. New lamp and horn broken up, spring forks twisted and broken, and ball bearing joint bent. Number plate and spindle also injured, besides other slight injuries. My coat was torn, and a hole sawed through the toe-cap of one boot by running belt. Fortunately I escaped personally with some bad bruises. Could you kindly inform me whether I have not a claim on owner of this dog? He promised to pay at the time, but I hear since that he is now in a different frame of mind. I have a witness, a push cyclist, who was behind me and saw the whole thing. A few successful prosecutions would do a lot to get rid of this nuisance. I believe the repair bill will amount to about £2 10s or £3. The dog was killed.

**(Dr) SA Darcy,**

**Clones, Co Monaghan, Ireland**

*Our correspondent certainly can claim damages if the dog is known to be vicious.—Ed.*



Mad? Cofused? Or simply misunderstood...

SOME YEARS AGO I was thrown from my Triumph by the deliberate charge of a large dog. I promptly gave the owner notice of my intention to sue him for all damages sustained, and he immediately paid up. All motor cyclists should adopt this course, and do as I should have done if necessary—fight the matter in the courts at all costs. Of my own personal knowledge I can speak of weekly, often daily, spills occasioned to riders in this district (Dudley). The governing bodies of the pastime seem too apathetic to take action. Another phase of the question that has always puzzled me is why the fertile brained imposer of imperial taxes, who has set his seal upon the motor industry and its poor supporters has so utterly neglected so easily exploited a source of revenue. Is there any connection between this attitude and the huge number of mixed-breed curs one encounters in the land of “inteeet to goodness, look you”? The tax ought to be at least one guinea per animal. This alone would rid our streets and roads to a large extent of the wholly unnecessary and undesirable cur. Hygienic reasons also ought to dictate a



substantial depletion of their numbers. Some definite action ought to be taken by the ACU, as it ostensibly caters for the needs of the motor cyclist in particular. In any event it would be useful if only that type of dog owner who lacks mental balance, and takes a demented delight in seeing his dog chase a motor cycle, could be brought to a clear understanding of what his position is.

### **Scarlet Pimpernel**

I NOTICED IN a recent issue a letter doubting a statement to the effect that a reader can average 110mpg on his 6hp Zenith. It may interest him to know that I have a 1912 6hp Bat, and with this machine I can average 112mpg, and the machine will attain a speed of 65mph on the level, even with this low consumption of petrol. The carburetter is the latest B and B single jet, the gear ratio  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to 1, and the jet a No 31. I have filed the extra air intake to admit more air. I am prepared to back up my statements if any reader still does not believe this performance possible.

### **M Campbell**

WE THINK THAT everyone connected with the motor cycle industry should do whatever they can to keep up the wave of enthusiasm which is now being shown for motor cycling generally. A good deal of the interest in the pastime comes from having something to do and somewhere to go to, and therefore competitions and reliability trials, etc, serve a very good purpose. As many of the manufacturers have this year decided not to support the TT races, may we appeal to some of the larger and more influential motor cycle agents that they themselves should enter a rider for these races? We ourselves thought of sending a donation to the ACU fund, but decided that perhaps it would serve the trade and pastime better if we entered a rider, and this we have done in the person of SL Bailey, who, it will be remembered, on his first ride with the Douglas machine which we supplied to him, put up the phenomenal feat of riding over fifty-six miles in the hour. It may savour of impudence, but we have also entered Mr Bailey on a  $2\frac{3}{4}$ hp Douglas to ride in the Senior TT Race. This, we think, will provide a valuable lesson, and the comparison of the speeds of the machines will no doubt prove very interesting. Another suggestion we have to make is that the more important clubs, who are all units of the ACU, should themselves be responsible for entering a rider in the TT Race; that each club vote from their fund, or subscribe voluntarily from among their members, a sufficient sum to enter one of their members in the TT Race. They could pick the best man, pay his expenses, and no doubt the ACU could make a rule to fit the case.

### **The Colmore Motor Cycle Depot**

*The above suggestion is an excellent one. It may interest the writer of the above letter to know that in 1907 the Coventry and Warwickshire Motor Club entered a member for the TT Race.—Ed.*

PLEASE ALLOW ME to thank you for a short paragraph you inserted in *The Motor Cycle* asking for help in the solution of a “difficult problem” with an old type engine.

Glad to say response was very good. Several came to see the engine. Each and all, separately unknown to each other, pointed their finger of scorn at the exhaust cam. A new cam was made giving 5/16in lift instead of 1/8in as before, and the results are most “grateful and comforting”. Engine does not now overheat, runs faster on the level, and climbs hills very much better. I was very glad of such spontaneous offers of help from unknown but very enthusiastic motor cyclists, who were ready to write letters, make appointments, call and examine and give advice with no hope of reward except to think they had helped someone out of a difficulty. Again thanking you for the paragraph.

**S Whittaker**

IT SEEMS THAT certain motor cyclists recently amused themselves by ‘blinding’ through a meet of staghounds on their low gears, with open exhausts, after which they proceeded to repeat the performance in front of a quiet hotel, which they afterwards entered dripping with mud and rain. They have since boastfully owned to this behaviour, which inclines me to suppose them innocent. Surely the ACU should take steps to investigate the truth of the matter, and, if it be proved, suspend the offenders indefinitely.

**CP Symonds**

THE ARMING OF Motor Cycle Companies: I have read the military motor cycling notes with great interest, and have nothing but good to wish them. I see it is advocated that each of the motor cycle companies should have twenty-five Rexers, and that the 35 officers, NCO’s and men should be armed with Mauser pistols. This, in my mind, will be a vast mistake, as, unless you have a first-rate fire control—and you can only get that by prolonged and unceasing training—you will find that ammunition will run out and not be easy to replace. I have seen Rexers on active service, and they eat up a waggon-load of ammunition in no time. I would like to see the units armed with the regulation arm, as it is a well-known fact that magazine fire is not half so deadly as single fire—especially with young troops, who will pull away as hard as they can unless, as I said, they have had a long and careful training, and the military motor cyclist, I judge, will not be able to spare the time for this. I should not care to be the man on the saddle with my half-section dangling a Mauser pistol seated on the pillion in the event of an alarm being suddenly given right ahead.

**CRL, Zululand**



Was a volunteer motor cyclist safe with a Rexer automatic rifle?

I AM BURDENED by an accumulating debt of gratitude for help and advice received on the road due to unknown gentlemen, whom I cannot repay. I am a 1912 novice. I was



quite un-familiar with such things, having no mechanical knowledge or experience. Why, I remember the first time the driving belt came off I did not know how to replace it. I have now done about 2,000 miles, and have encountered most of the beginner's roadside troubles. Never, day nor night, have I been in difficulties on the road but some brother motor cyclists have stopped to ask what my trouble was, and to render practical help, given freely and courteously, and with amazing patience. They have diagnosed the trouble that my inexperience could not detect, and, when the sooted plug, or broken valve, or tappets out of adjustment, or whatever it was, was located, I have been almost pushed aside while the matter was put right for me. When held up in the dark on a country road, a passing motor cyclist took my passenger and myself eight miles to the nearest town. If, sir, there is any other sport where such astonishing decency and good feeling are shown to beginners, I wonder what it is. I thanked all these gentlemen as well as I could at the time, and I thank them again. Each has always said, "That's all right," and ridden away. As it happened, in the case of the breakdown mentioned above, that my passenger was an American guest to whom I was trying to show something of our countryside, I was not a little proud that he also obtained such a favourable impression of the good feeling amongst British motor cyclists on the road, and I know he has not failed to take that impression home with him. In conclusion, it only remains for me to say that I am trying to catch the spirit that has been shown to me. It was with peculiar satisfaction the other night that I assisted an absolute beginner to locate his trouble, and diagnosed it right (sooted plug) the very first time. "Amongst the blind the one-eyed man is king!"

#### **LE2555**

A RIDER OF A racing Douglas (judging from its Brooklands crackle) was observed on Sunday morning, while passing through High Street, Bromley, Kent, at a comfortable pace, to place his hands simultaneously into his pockets, bringing forth matches and cigarettes, and then to light a cigarette and redace the before mentioned articles in his pockets without in the least disturbing himself or the control of his machine. This speaks well for the steadiness of the Douglas and the rider's skill, and he should next try Bromley High Street on a Wednesday evening—after early closing, when he will have an appreciative audience.

#### **Myer B Lee**

SOME TIME DURING July, the War Office asked for a number of motor cyclists to volunteer for duty with the Army during the Manoeuvres. I believe they got the required number, and during and also after the Manoeuvres we heard a great deal about how well they performed their work, and what a help they were, but now, apparently, the War Office have forgotten all about them, as no pay or acknowledgment has come along up to date. Now, sir, do you think this is the way to get us another year? I have asked several for their opinion, and they all say, "No thanks".

#### **Disgusted**



Here's a further selection, included just because I enjoyed them. Where possible I've included the publication date.

*Motor Cycling* 25 June 1930

I ENDORSE 'UNAPPROACHABLE'S' claim of a 44mph average from London to Leeds a being quite practicable. The Great North Road is a marvellous road for high averages, there being few towns and many long straight stretches. A friend of mine on a 500 ohv machine averaged 46mph from Eggham to York via Tadcaster on a Saturday afternoon, and an Austin Seven did the journey at exactly 40mph. That it would be easy to maintain a high average on a big machine is evident, since on a 250 I have averaged 36 from York to London, the point being that I was doing a steady 40 all the way, and never once exceeded 45. I think that on a 500 ohv in the early morning London to York could be done in four hours, or 50mph.

**GJ592**

*The Motor Cycle* 1903

I REGRET TO SEE THAT you are advocating, or rather countenancing, the adoption of motor bicycle driving by ladies. To my mind, woman was never made for an engine driver, and has not that cool nerve required so often in motoring. I saw a lady motorist riding a Singer lady's machine for the first time some fortnight ago at Cambridge, and without being ungallant, I don't want to see another. Her nervousness was pathetically obvious, and her facial expression was an index to the sustained nervous tension under which she was labouring.

I am sure that the natural constitution of the gentler sex is not such that they can extract any pleasure or physical good from such a pastime as motoring, which requires strong nerves, and a cool and ready hand and head. Of course there are ladies who are made of very much sterner stuff than the majority, but I am sure that if motor cycling is indulged in by ladies, they will be a source of considerable danger, both to themselves and other users of the road, and I pity the poor men when the ladies of the household come home from a hard ride 'a bundle of nerves'. The majority of lady cyclists are bad enough in observing the rule of the road and practising gymkhanas all over the place, hopping off in front of one without the slightest warning, riding three abreast, and doing other funny things, but Heaven forbid the lady motorist.

**SMTB**



*The Motor Cycle* 28 October 1903.

WHEN I PENNED MY RECENT letter to you I quite anticipated a reply from that well-known lady motor cyclist, Mrs. Kennard. I sincerely hope she has not taken my remarks personally, as she is one of the few exceptions which prove the rule, and one admires her nerve in going in for a pastime-even moderately as she does-such as motor cycling. Even Mrs. Kennard must confess (and should be proud of the fact, perhaps) that she is one of those ladies made of "sterner stuff," to which I referred. With regard to your other contributor, who signs herself "Woman-an Engine Driver," I really cannot see what to answer to her gentle vapourings, as they are pointless. What has the price of motor bicycles got to do with the principle of the suitability or otherwise of motor cycling for ladies (beg pardon – women)? She seems to have gone to some trouble also to ascertain the number of lady (my mistake, I quite forgot – woman) motor cyclists in the British Isles. It would be interesting to learn how she made her census. I should be very sorry to be forced to the conclusion that "Woman-an Engine Driver," is a "new woman," but her concluding paragraph certainly points in that direction. She has entirely misunderstood my letter, and seems to have drifted into the question of that old chestnut, so-called "women's rights." I referred to motor cycling for ladies purely from a physical and constitutional point of view. Neither of your correspondents has disproved my contention that motor cycling, ie, the actual driving of a motor cycle, is particularly unsuitable as a pastime for the "gentler" sex. If they can do so, I will willingly concede my point. As a matter of fact, it is with tremulous feelings that I take the audacious liberty of crossing pens with your fair correspondents, and it is only my conviction that I am right which forces me to do so.

**SMJR**

*The Motor Cycle* 1903

YOUR CORRESPONDENT 'SMTB' SEEMS very nervous where ladies are concerned. I must say I think he is unnecessarily so. I have ridden over 2,000 miles on a motor bicycle, and only had one accident. This was occasioned by a male cyclist, who ran into and upset me, as well as himself. I ride everywhere alone, doing journeys of one hundred miles and under. I do not consider a motor bicycle is pleasant in thick traffic or on greasy trams, but with the Bowden system of control a lady can manage her mount quite easily, and run comparatively few risks if she rides with ordinary prudence. Dogs are the principal danger, and foolish cyclists (male and female) who possess little or no headpiece. Why forbid the lady motorist? She exists already and will surely increase.

**Mary E Kennard**

*The Motor Cycle* 1903

AS A WOMAN, AND A RIDER of a Singer motor bicycle, I would most respectfully call the attention of SNJR to a few facts which he has evidently overlooked. Far be it from me to take up the pained and painful attitude of a brow-beaten Premier; but is your correspondent fair? I think not. Every woman ("ladies" preside at wash-tubs!) can do

what her particular nature permits her. There are some women, and also men, who ought not to approach within ear-shot of a motor bicycle; but with motors at their present price, the fact that a woman invests in one with the intention of riding it shows she is not one of these. Practice makes perfect, and if circumstances forced the Cambridge motorist into traffic before she felt sure of her mount, she is to be sincerely pitied, and not made the subject of an appeal to an even higher power than the local Robert—plus stop-watch. There are, I believe, six women motor bicyclists within the British Isles, and there must be six hundred waiting for the right moment and the right machine. As for SMJR, all the consolation I can offer is that, despite my best efforts, it seems probable that there is still some little time between him and the day his nerves seem to dread—the period when absolute equality in all things, subject to an individual capability, will be afforded to all human beings, without regard to the somewhat delicate point as to whether they mote in French boots or Stohwasser's puttie leggings.

### **Woman—An Engine Driver**

*The Motor Cycle* 1903

IT MAY INTEREST YOUR LADY readers to know I have been using one of Messers Dunhill's patent safety pins for motor caps for some time, and am quite delighted with it. I had previously found it most unpleasant in windy weather having to hold my cap (or hat) to prevent it blowing up. I have used the pin on both hat and cap with the same result, and am sure every lady will be delighted with it.

**Helena**

*The Motor Cycle* 19 December 1938

Power Cycles: The 'What Shall We Call Them?' Discussion Continued.

WHEN MR AM RUFF WRITES that the word 'velocycle' is "a hybrid of the deepest dye" he slightly exaggerates. The first part is undoubtedly from the Latin, but so is the tail. 'Cyclos' is a Latin word borrowed from the Greek 'Kuklos', nevertheless it is a good Latin word. I ascertained this before submitting the suggestion, for I agree that two languages should not be blended in one word, though it has been done in the common English word 'bicycle'. The Greek prefix is 'di-' — 'bi-' is Latin. 'Velocycle' does not sound foreign, and it is not foreign. Latin is part of our English language. Anglo-Saxon is one only of many other languages which have been fused into our English tongue. Though away from the point, I would point out that 'brake' (Old French), 'hub' (origin unascertained, its first traced use was in 1649), 'tire' (an abbreviation of 'attire', derived from Old French), and 'frame' (Old Norse) are not "good old Anglo-Saxon words", while the 'foreign' words 'engine' (traced back to 1330), 'car' (to 1382), 'valve' (to 1387) and 'motor' (to 1586) have been long enough in use to have ceased to be foreign. When I wrote that 'velomoteur' looks foreign, so that it would be preferable not to adopt it, I had in mind the fate that has befallen the name of the variable cycle gear known as 'derailleur'. To hear this anglicised is painful, yet speak of a "de-ray-ee-eh" gear and you are either not comprehended, or marked down as trying to be superior. 'Velomoteur' is,



and looks, alien and would not be gracious to our tongue.

**HJ Kendrick, Coventry**

*Motor Cycling* 2 May 1910

THE FOLLOWING FACTS ABOUT myself I thought might be of interest to your journal, as I have been told by lots of my friends that they believe it constitutes a record, as far as it goes. The record is this: my weight is 17st 13oz, and I am at the present time riding a 3½hp Bradbury. I have ridden it for hundreds of miles and have not as yet had to get off at any hills, but the thing which I want to know is, is there another motorcyclist in England whose weight is more than this? I have not yet come across any other rider approaching this weight, and I should be extremely obliged if you would bring this the notice of the readers of your journal, as it is a certainty I shall never be able to establish a record for speed, but I think I can easily establish one for weight.

**Jas W Woodhall**

*The Motor Cycle* 1927

BEING CAUGHT BY A SERGEANT two miles from home with the bulb of my rear light burnt out, and being fool enough not to have had a spare one...I had to fall back on the following stunt: I stuck three Gold Flakes in the bowl of my pipe and filled up all air leaks with some plasticine...Then, removing the stem, I substituted a length of acetylene tubing, plugging this up with plasticine and binding it with insulation tape. By strapping the pipe to the carrier with tape and lighting the 'fags' I was able to get home past three policemen (including my sergeant). Of course it was necessary to puff furiously through the tubing, and I must say I have enjoyed cigarettes better on other occasions, but it made an excellent red light, and the gaspers were just beginning to make the plasticine frizzle by the time I reached home. The vibration of the bike shook off the ash, keeping the light bright. This stunt is hardly to be recommended for London-Land's End runs and such like, but for shorter night trips what is more pleasant than to enjoy a smoke and burn a rear light at the same time, killing two birds with one stone, as it were?

**Robt L Owen**

## **Ixion's history of the pioneering years**

This isn't part of the timeline but it's just too good to leave out. In 1937 Ixion wrote a four-part 'history of the motor cycle movement' from the Butler Petrol-cycle and Daimler Einspur to British global supremacy in the years after the Great War. No one was more involved in that history and no one could have recalled it so beautifully. This is a yarn to read and read again. Ixion, over to you.

### **Part 1**

#### **The Days of the Pioneers**

##### **Red Flag Days and After: Experiments with Petrol-Driven Two- and Three-wheelers**

THERE WERE BRAVE men in the last century. Brave enough to wear bushy side whiskers and long droopy moustaches; to love girls with ringlets and crinolines. But none brave enough to stick an engine on a penny-farthing bicycle. So the Butler 'Petrol-cycle' (drawings shown at the 1884 Stanley Show) was a trike. Three largish wheels, with the driver seated between the front pair; two cylinders cuddling the back wheel – one on each side; coil ignition; float-fed carburetter; rotary valves; and a pedal which yanked the rear wheel up on two small side castors while you started up.

Did it ever run? Possibly a few yards on private ground by 1887. If it ran, Butler didn't like it, for he expended all the capital of his syndicate on building a Mark II, and then closed down. After all, with a 4mph limit and the expense of engaging a man with a red flag to trudge ahead of you, motor cycling could hardly be worth while.

Germans suffered from no such tiresome restrictions, so when, in 1885, Gottlieb Daimler wished to try out an air-cooled engine, he had a brainwave. Why not mount the experimental engine on two wheels? Eventually, he felt quite pleased with the ultimate engine (a twin) and promptly built a four-wheel chassis for it, thus ranking as the ancestor of all those pseudo motor cyclists who 'vert to cars at the first possible moment.

But Gottlieb built (and either rode or paid somebody else to ride) at least two motor bicycles. No money would induce me to ride either of them. They were just steel hobby horses with artillery wheels, and a line drawing of either of them is calculated to throw anybody into a cold sweat.

Imagine the controls of his MkII. Its handlebar was coupled to the fork by a flat belt, and when this slipped you either couldn't go into a bend or couldn't come out of one. Should you, in these trying circumstances, elect to stop, you twisted the entire handlebar sharply. This manoeuvre tightened two cords, one of which (with luck) freed the engine by hauling a jockey pulley off the driving belt, while the other (again with luck) applied a shoe brake to the tyre of the rear wheel.

British engineers viewed these foreign experiments with interest, jealousy or derision, as the case might be, but the red flag law made it useless for inventors to get busy in these islands, and the first essential was a campaign for legal reform.

This battle was approaching victory in October 1895 when Sir David Salmons borrowed



the Tunbridge Wells agricultural showground for our first 'Great Horseless Carriage Exhibition'. Two motor cycles graced this event. The better of the two was a ½hp De Dion tricycle scaling no more than 90lb; the other was a slightly heavier model on similar lines by the Gladiateur Company.

Parliamentary opposition was now being overborne, and our engineers frenziedly studied Continental developments in readiness for the anticipated boom in society circles.

In 1895 a German Hildebrand & Wolfmüller bicycle was demonstrated on the Coventry track by MJ Schulte. It had an open frame, with tank and batteries between the front down tubes, and its rear wheel was direct-driven by the conrods of a horizontal engine. It inspired Colonel Holden to bring out a water-cooled flat four of 3hp with hollow-cranked conrods, mounted on a cross-head, driving a tint back wheel direct. It was beautifully made, ran nicely at a fair speed, but was terribly unreliable. A number were sold between 1899 and 1902.

In 1896 the greatest engineering quack in history, EJ Pennington, landed from America and built a couple of motor bicycles for which he extorted £100,000 from credulous financiers and investors. The nation went crazy, expecting an instantaneous transformation of our whole transport system.

One machine was a solo and the other a tandem. Both had twin-cylinder engines that projected horizontally astern of the rear wheel. There was no carburetter, and the fuel ran down inside a rear frame tube directly into the inlet pipe. The fuel was alleged to be paraffin, and its efficiency was ascribed to a "long mingling spark" invented by Pennington. This spark was actually an ordinary coil-ignition spark, the current being derived from dry cells and boosted by a coil.

Pennington used a fake densimeter to persuade the credulous that his fuel was paraffin, whereas in fact it was the finest petrol. As the cylinders of his engines were plain steel tubes devoid of any finning and air-cooled, the marvel is that the machines ever ran at all. They were governed on the fuel feed, had a speed range of 8-30mph, and demonstrations were usually terminated by a failure of the contact-breaker spring.

A weird period of financial buccaneering ensued. Personalities like HJ Lawson, Pennington and their satellites captured the popular imagination. Britain waited breathlessly for an immense output of cheap motor vehicles – cars, tricycles and bicycles, on which everybody was to tour at high speed, leaping rivers and hedges in their stride.

Some of the financiers actually believed in these dreams, and were fighting to secure the rights of all the successful Continental inventions. But actual manufacture moved very slowly.

In 1896 Accles produced a British copy of the De Dion tricycle, but trouble was sustained with its dry-cell-cum-coil ignition, and instead of curing the trouble, the sponsors adopted 'tube ignition'. This consisted of a short platinum tube inserted through the wall of the combustion chamber; its outer end was heated by a small

blowlamp resembling a primus stove. What with choking, blowing out and conflagrations, this ignition put a heavy brake on progress.

In the same year the first Beeston tricycle appeared, followed by a two-seater quad. Two years later the same firm produced a 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ hp chain-driven motor bicycle which could actually travel at 27mph.

In 1897 the famous Stanley Cycle Show staged several machines, including Humber and Beeston petrol motor cycles and a freak electric Humber tandem, deriving its energy from accumulators and designed for pacing cycle races. Anon the Coventry Motor Company produced several motor bicycles, propelled through a wooden engine pulley which drove the rear tyre by friction. Mrs De Veulle received a diamond ring from HJ Lawson as a reward for riding one of these dreadful machines from Coventry to London.

But nothing could popularise motor bicycles at this epoch. What with difficult starting, gross unreliability, a one-speed engine devoid of any control for slow running, lack of power, no gears for hills, the risk of fire, bad tyres, extreme discomfort, and incessant trouble with dogs, horses and cattle, not to mention the eternal risk of skidding on the greasy roads of the period, even the most enthusiastic adventurer thought twice before he attempted a serious journey.

The dawn of the real motor cycle era was thus postponed until about 1900, when motor tricycles of real utility began to appear on the market. The De Dion was freely imported, and a British edition was built under licence and called the MMC. The British Ariel, largely copied from the De Dion, was superior to it in workmanship and a great favourite. Its engine was in front of the axle, instead of behind it as on the De Dion, so the front wheel did not fly up when one hopped at the machine to get a start; and its gearing was encased (the naked gears of a De Dion could be heard at the range of a mile when they became worn).

Some people towed their passengers in trailers, which were often wide, two-seater affairs of great comfort; others anchored the rear half of a ladies' bicycle to the rear axle; others again mounted a quad forecar in lieu of the front wheel.

As soon as the tricycle became firmly established other firms entered the market – Enfield, Eadie, Allard, Dennis, Swift, etc. Presently FR Simms bought the rights to the Bosch low-tension magneto and adapted this form of ignition to a complete power unit built inside a small wheel which was employed as the rear wheel of a motor cycle and the front wheel of a tricycle. Miss Muriel Hind (later Mrs Lord) rode one of his open-framed machines for thousands of miles, and did much to convince the country that motor bicycles possessed a future.

As this machine (built by Singers) was blessed with a genuinely reliable ignition it was more reliable than most motor vehicles of the day, which found their Achilles heel in the ignition. By 1900 some fifty concerns were turning out a small trickle of motor vehicles, the majority being three-wheelers.

The year 1900 brought the epoch making Thousand Miles Trial which attracted eight



motor cycle entries, viz, two Ariel trikes, one Ariel quad, one MMC trike, one (French) Empress trike, one Enfield quad (entered by Mr Edward Iliffe, now Lord Iliffe) and two French Werner motor bicycles.

The bicycles did not actually start, but they turned the minds of the trade in a new direction. Odd as it seems today, the real value of this Werner was that it stereotyped belt drive. The belt, being of the twisted-hide pattern, was as bad a belt as could possibly be devised for the purpose, and caused incessant trouble. But it eliminated the harshness characteristic of previous drives; it enabled machines to remain light; and if it open stopped the rider, he could always repair.

This Werner was a terrible brute to ride. Carrying its engine high up over the front wheel, its top-heaviness provoked skidding of a virulence unknown today. Its tube ignition set fire to everything when the machine toppled over. At the best, one had to stop every dozen miles or so to pour oil from a bottle into the crank case; and its construction was so poor that it seldom achieved a ten-mile non-stop run. But its lightness and cheapness made us all realise the possibilities inherent in a type of motor cycle which had yet to be born.

Experiment followed experiment in quick succession. By 1903 the Werner brothers had evolved an improved model with the engine mounted low and centrally fed by a spray carburettor driven by a flat belt. Almost immediately afterwards the Excelsior people produced a really good machine with cycle fittings of the finest British workmanship, and fitted it with a 2¾hp MMC engine (copied from the De Dion) slung below the front down tube. Its tyres were too light and its single untrussed fork blades too weak, while the De Dion contact-breaker was tricky to adjust; but this machine was genuinely roadworthy. The writer drove one for 15,000 miles with practically no trouble apart from tyres and belts, after converting the ignition to a wipe-contact with trembler coil. Then came the Quadrant which operated its ignition, throttle control and compression release by means of a single lever. Motor cycling was now launched as a genuinely practical hobby and an economical method of transport.

## **Part 2: The Two-wheeler's Rapid Progress**

### **A Host of Different Makes: How the Motor Cycling Club Assisted Development: The Advent of Brooklands and the TT Races**

BY 1901 THE MOTOR bicycle was firmly established, and the popularity of the motor tricycle dwindled. The present generation can revive these dead years by a comparison with the early phases of aviation, which closely resembled the pioneer years of motor cycling. Both periods display the exploitation of a new transport by novices. In both a host of petty makers produced a trickle of weird machines, faulty in design, and evincing no trace of standardisation. In both, the manufacturer hardly began to build unless and until he received a firm order. In both, the general public regarded the pioneers as a little crazy.

Trouble was the rule rather than the exception. Belts slipped; forks broke; timing gears

sheared; valves snapped in halves; tanks leaked; brakes went out of action. But still the enthusiasts persevered. There is no record of the annual output of machines in such years as 1901, 1902 and 1903; small as it was, it was divided between a great many builders, most of whom purchased their engines in France or Belgium, or shamelessly copied the more successful foreign engines.

Some of the cycle factories produced one or two models of motor bicycles as sidelines. Other machines were erected by small assemblers, who often experienced extreme difficulty in keeping the broker's men at armed lengths, possibly extracting advance deposits from their customers wherewith to pay the first installment on the components which were needed for erection.

There were a lot of different makes: Werner, Excelsior, Quadrant, Humber, Phelon and Moore, Pearson-Aster, Minerva, R and P, Bradshaw, Phoenix, Clement-Garrard, Raleigh, Enfield, Shaw, Singer, Chase, Ormonde, Kitto, Lawson, Triumph, Matchless, Hillman, Rex, Bat, Booth, FN and many others. The ranks were swollen by the surviving motor tricycles and by many now forgotten machines assembled from components by local cycle dealers, who put their own transfer on the tank and perhaps never turned out more than one machine which they failed to sell, and kept perforce for their own riding. The year 1903 proved decisive in the development of the motor bicycle. It did not usher in any boom in trade or any epoch-making novelties in design. But it saw the year-old Motor Cycling Club organise riders in the Metropolitan area and institute the first in a long series of road trials which were destined to identify the weak spots in design and construction, to convince engineers that a perfected machine could furnish cheap and reliable transport, and to galvanise an embryo industry into life and power.

Since no machines of this date could climb steep hills, thanks to undependable transmissions, low-powered, woolly engines, and the limitations of a single gear, the first tests were remarkably simple. The machines were assembled on a Saturday or Sunday at some point just clear of the London traffic, such as Redbourn, in Herts, and were set to cover fifty miles non-stop over a simple circuit. This short distance usually sufficed to eliminate most of the entry with some breakdown or toher; but we learnt by our disasters.

The distances were gradually extended. Each rider lasted longer as his experience ripened. By August the committee actually ventured to organise a 200-mile non-stop and a 'Happy Pair' competition was held for passenger models in October 1903 which produced ten entries – three forecars, three tandems and four trailers. Five of them completed 100 miles without a stop over a 25-mile course from Godstone (Surrey) to near Lewes, although two exceeded the allowed speed (17mph) and one was too slow (10mph).

Thus encouraged, the MCC organised the first London to Edinburgh run in 1904 as a great national demonstration of the capacity of the new transport.

Seventy entered, 46 started and 22 reached Edinburgh within 24 hours. Many of the failures were due to the crude lamps of the period. These were carried on brackets of



the cycle type, with small gas generators under the burner, the gas flow being steadied by a small rubber bag in the lamp casing.

This run was historic because Elyard Brown appeared at the start with a huge sheet-metal case on his carrier containing no fewer than four 20Ah accumulators – probably the first serious attempt to apply electricity to this purpose. He duly reached Edinburgh by 10pm, although history does not record how many ampere-hours remained in the battery cells; the batteries of the period simply dripped paste off their plates under the vibration of motor cycling.

Later in the year the MCC endeavoured to rope provincial riders into the new enthusiasm, and the first club team trial was held on 27 August 1904. The premier award was The Motor Cycle Cup, and there were five club entries: Coventry, MCC, Peterborough, Guildford and the Southern MC. Marks were awarded at the rate of one for each mile covered without a stop, and the maximum possible was 600. Coventry scored 485, MCC 381½, Peterborough 245½, Guildford 202, and the poor Southern MC a beggarly 101½. These mileages, registered by the finest cracks of the day, afford a picturesque impression of reliability standards in 1904.

Two riders in each team of six were compelled by the rules to drive some form of passenger vehicle, and an easy hill at Aynho, near Banbury, was responsible for some hefty pedalling and a great many lost marks.

The year 1905 produced great advances. The high-tension magneto, coupled with improved sparking plugs, banished three-quarters of the ignition problems; reliability had never been possible with many feet of flimsy flex coupling a shoddy accumulator to a dubious coil, a rickety contact breaker and a dud plug. Transmission now displayed itself as the Achilles heel of the motor bicycle, but there was still much room for metallurgy to perfect engines.

In this year the Triumph Company sought publicity for their new all-British 3hp machine by setting it to cover 200 miles a day for six days. It broke its frame near the end of the first essay, but completed its task on a second attempt. Nevertheless, the rider used at least one exhaust valve daily, and the piston rings were so worn after 200 miles that there was no need to use the valve-lifter for starting purposes.

The Auto Cycle Club was beginning to wrest the reins of development from the MCC, and in 1905 it organised a 750-mile Six Days Trial. Thirty-one machines started, 21 finished and six earned gold medals. Greatly courageous, the organisers included the ascent of Birdlip Hill. Three machines climbed it under power. One was a single-gear 5hp Ariel, which was forced up the long ascent by a determined rider with super leg muscles. The other two were prophetic – both were two-speed Phelon and Moore machines with chain drive. The gear consisted of double primary chains and sprockets operated by tiny metal clutches on the countershaft, and goggle-eyed men, lying purple-faced and panting by the hedges half-way up Birdlip, stared incredulously at the machines as they climbed steadily under their own power.

A further advance in reliability was seen in 1906. Motor cycles were fair timekeepers

provided they encountered tolerable weather and were given easy roads. The MCC actually dared to offer the Schulte Trophy for ride from London to Edinburgh and back—800 miles of easy going. Eleven out of 12 aspirants completed the double journey. Passenger machines were still extremely uncertain – only four of 15 starters in this class covered the 400 miles to Edinburgh. In this same summer the ACC ran its Six Days Trial over the Land's End-John o' Groats course. It secured 73 entries, but only 13 managed to average 15mph over the classic route, and several of the machines that finished were mechanical wrecks.

Any intelligent student of the record up to this point would remark that a severe racing programme was required in order to provide metallurgical and other data for a better power output and loftier standards of reliability. Hitherto, the value of high-speed tests had not been realised. In the earliest days, primitive motor cycles of freak design and high power had been employed to pace cyclists on their tracks, but these racing machines were monstrosities with no kinship to road models.

As far back as 1904 the French Club offered a cup for an international road race, but its stipulations imposed a maximum weight limit of 108½lb, which neutralised any influence it might otherwise have exerted on tourist machines. Our entry was a fiasco. Similar rules held for 1905, when 19 British machines contested a Manx eliminating trial to select our team of three riders. Most of these machines were big-twins, scaling inside the set weight of 108½lb, and all of them were ridiculous. The industry realised the folly of such regulations and in 1906 only five machines entered for the team-choosing tests at Knowsley Park.

But we were learning our lesson, and 1907 was to prove a real landmark. It witnessed the opening of Brooklands Track and the organisation of the first Tourist Trophy races in the Isle of Man. The word 'tourist' should be underlined, for it identifies the original value of these races. In conjunction with Brooklands they provided a laboratory where any manufacturer could obtain any desired data both about the methods of extracting horsepower from a given cylinder capacity and of instilling genuine stamina into his products.

An amusing incident illustrates this point. A manufacturer of the assembler type found his sales impaired by a rival who used the same brand of engine, the 'X'. An inventor brought down another engine, the 'Y', which easily beat the 'X' up the works' test hill. The manufacturer was on the verge of contracting for 1,000 'Y' engines when his chief engineer asked permission to contrast the two engines at Brooklands. On the track engine 'Y' was far slower than engine 'X', and died away in a lap or two. They analysed the characteristics of the two engines, and ultimately combined the best qualities of both for their new engine!

### **Part 3: The Coming of Variable Gears**

**Lessons of the First Scottish Six Days Trial: When the TT Course was Lapped at 42mph: Variable Gears Come to Stay**



THE YEAR 1908 WAS one of promise rather than of achievement. Nothing very exciting happened, yet powerful tendencies began to harden. For example, pedalling gears were barred in the TT, a change which automatically set designers musing on how to ginger up their engines, and eventually drove them to experiment with variable gears.

In this same year two epoch-making engines appeared. At Bristol two firms (Barter and Fairy) had lost hundreds of pounds in the effort to sell a flat-twin engine, and the Douglas people suddenly made a success of the enterprise. The smooth running, easy starting, silence and good power output of their 350cc unit created a sensation. But a wild sensation was caused at the Newnham hill-climb of the Coventry club. Here every summer the Big Chiefs on the industry feverishly contested a little family combat, where strangers were tolerated but always humiliated when the prize awards came out.

In 1908 an unassuming nonentity from Yorkshire, in the person of AA Scott, walked off with all three events on formula, and his new two-stroke boasted an admirable kick-starter, an open frame and a lovely exhaust.

Scott is an eternal argument in favour of non-standardised education. His parents sent him to a freak school, Abbotsholme, where everything was poles asunder from the normal public school. Abbotsholme boys could play cricket, provided they first made their own bats and wickets; they could boat, but they must make their own boats. So Scott staggered the pundits with a machine bristling with originality in every feature. He did not convert the industry to open frames or to two-stroke engines, but he forced kick-starters and variable gears on a lethargic world.

The following year preached a trenchant sermon on the text which Scott had placarded; and the sermon was launched in Scotland, where the Edinburgh MCC organised their first six-day trial (really a five-day event).

Twenty-six victims were shepherded north for this violent frightfulness. Ignored and unrestrained by mellowing trade influences, the MCC sketched a long circuit of mountainous roads. None of the official cars could manage the course. The motor cyclists pedalled and pushed, and ran alongside, and panted, and fell exhausted in the heather.

Everybody returned south convinced that the motor cycle of tomorrow must have a variable gear enabling it to climb hills surely and without murdering its owner; moreover, every motor cycle must have some method of engine starting which would work against a gradient; stoppages on a hill must not force the owner to return to the bottom. This was pure Scottology.

The issue was both blurred and postdated by the ACU during the same summer. Their Six Days was pusillanimous by comparison, obsessed by trade influences and the gospel of salesmanship. It would never do to let an English public know that motor cycles could not climb steep hills. Three test hills were listed – Birdlip, Dinas and the Cat and Fiddle. Twenty-five bonus marks were offered for each hill.

It was thought that if the time scheduled allowed a long stop for cooling engines at the foot of each hill, and riders were allowed to screw down their adjustable engine pulleys

and fit new belts, most riders would get up. Actually only 10% of the entry earned full hill-climbing marks, even under these easy conditions, and the organisers kicked themselves. But what they mistook for a minor tragedy was in reality a godsend.

Variable gears increasingly entered the limelight.

Most people fought shy of the 1910 Scottish. The trade refused to enter, because the far-north offered few sales and too remote an advertisement, but seven of the 19 entries employed variable gears. This innovation unveiled a fresh hoodoo, for the engines of that day wilted if they were freely revved up long hills on low gears.

The whole process culminated in 1911. The ACU developed both cunning and virility. Some genius suggested a Junior TT race, foreseeing that machines of the featherweight Douglas type would make a great appeal to many potential riders, and therefore deserved the stimulus which a race would impart.

Simultaneously, it was clear that tiny engines could never climb Snaefell on a single gear. As the majority of manufacturers were interested solely in much larger engines, they offered no great resistance. A half-hearted attempt was made by the trade to permit the tinies to use pedals, but the big firms had no serious interest or belief in the Junior race. And when the Motor Cycle vigorously supported the ACU in its 'no pedal' policy, pedals were barred. Luckily, the Armstrong people seized this moment to bring out a heavier version of their three-speed hub. The first Junior race secured 34 entries, of which 30 had variable gears – more than half using the Armstrong hub. They lapped the full Mountain circuit at the astounding speed of 42mph and touched 55mph on the level. In doing so they established variable gears as part of the essential specification of all good roadster machines.

Actually, the practice period of the Manx event was hectic and humorous. Only two entrants in the Senior event went to the Island intending to race with variable gears – Scott and Phelon & Moore. But practice opened many eyes as single geared 500 riders watched the variably geared tinies conquering the Mountain.

The Colliers hastily faked up emergency gears of the variable-pulley type. Frantic wires sizzled from Douglas to Coventry imploring the factory engineers to send over some sort of a gear by the next boat. The single-geared brigade anxiously eyed the Indian team which smiled happily in the possession of two-speed countershaft gears with all-chain drive. These Indians finished 1, 2, 3 despite frantic efforts by the Colliers; the fastest single-geared machine to finish was 20 minutes behind the winner, and most of the single-geared 500s were actually out-speeded by variable-geared tinies. This 1911 race killed the single gear, and administered slow poison to belt drive as well. The transmission battle was over.

Followed the Scottish Six Days with a crazier course than ever. It attracted 35 entries – 20 of them on variable-geared machines. There were 15 golds awarded, and 10 of them went to machines with the new transmission.

The whole atmosphere had changed within 12 months.

Mind you, most gears of this date (except Indian, Douglas, Scott and Phelon and Moore)

were poor things at the best. But the worst of them felt like the millenium after years of hill-dodging, or that awful business of rush and pedal until the cardiac revs peaked. On the crest of this movement the ACU rode to triumph. Its 1911 event was a hub-and-spoke Six Days with Harrogate as the hub. Eighty-three entries included 65 variable-gearred machines. We of the Motor Cycle who had worn our nibs flat for half a generation advocating gears could sing our Nunc dimittis at long last. Never again could any fool arise to urge that variable gears were an unnecessary complication. The whole trade was hot-foot to standardise and perfect the innovation.

#### **Part 4: Variable Gears and All-chain Transmission Established: The Post-War Boom—and Slump**

WE HAVE SEEN how the year 1911 finally established variable gears as an essential item in motor cycle specifications. From 1911 till the outbreak of war in 1914 designers strove to perfect gear design, and wrestled with the new transmission systems and other structural changes which gears imposed.

Their vision did not clear instantaneously; they had to choose between belt drive, chain-cum-belt (primary chain with final belt) and all-chain. And if all-chain drive ultimately triumphed, its victory was not immediate, and naturally necessitated a considerable stiffening up of both frames and engines, together with the insertion of shock-absorbers to soften the acerbity of the more rigid transmission. These innovations added a deal of weight. Moreover, the riding public had to be educated to realise the merits of the new drives.

Then the War stunned development for four long years; innumerable machines were built for military purposes, but solidity rather than speed governed their design. The riders joined the Army mostly via the Royal Flying Corps, the Motor Machine Gun Corps or the Tank Corps. The plants were converted to munition work. Petrol was first rationed and finally restricted to essential national purposes. Ordinary motor cycling died a temporary death, although a few cars continued to run on coal gas or white oils.

When the Armistice was signed recovery was unexpectedly slow as the entire industry had to be reorganised; and as the demand for new machines far exceeded the supplies, prices steepled. The most interesting of the early post-War designs, the 398cc transverse flat-twin ABC, was catalogued at £160, and in spite of this extraordinary price its producers (an offshoot of the Sopwith aviation interests) lost all the capital which they had devoted to its production, and the machine died before it ever became really mature.

One rider early in 1919 paid £345 for an American four-cylinder machine with sidecar, and a couple of years later was glad to accept an allowance of £35 for it in part-exchange for a new machine.

As post-War production simmered down the three-speed all-chain machine soon stood out as the standard type. Meanwhile, various factors began to exert potent influences on the industry. The cessation of all normal manufacture during the War years inevitably



created a famine in many commodities during 1919 so demand was temporarily exaggerated to absurd dimensions. Few people foresaw that the shortage would be rapidly met and that plants organised to grapple with such a famine would then face blank order-sheets. Hence a slump ensued after a year or two.

The War had taught our engineers the principles of mass production, and it soon became clear that the day of a multitude of small factories constructing motor cycles (or indeed any other articles) more or less by hand was over for ever. So the number of firms engaged in the trade began to dwindle at a rapid rate. Bankruptcies and 'mergers' became the order of the day. Many famous factories closed down; many machines with long and honourable reputations vanished for ever; and the motor cycle industry became concentrated in comparatively few hands.

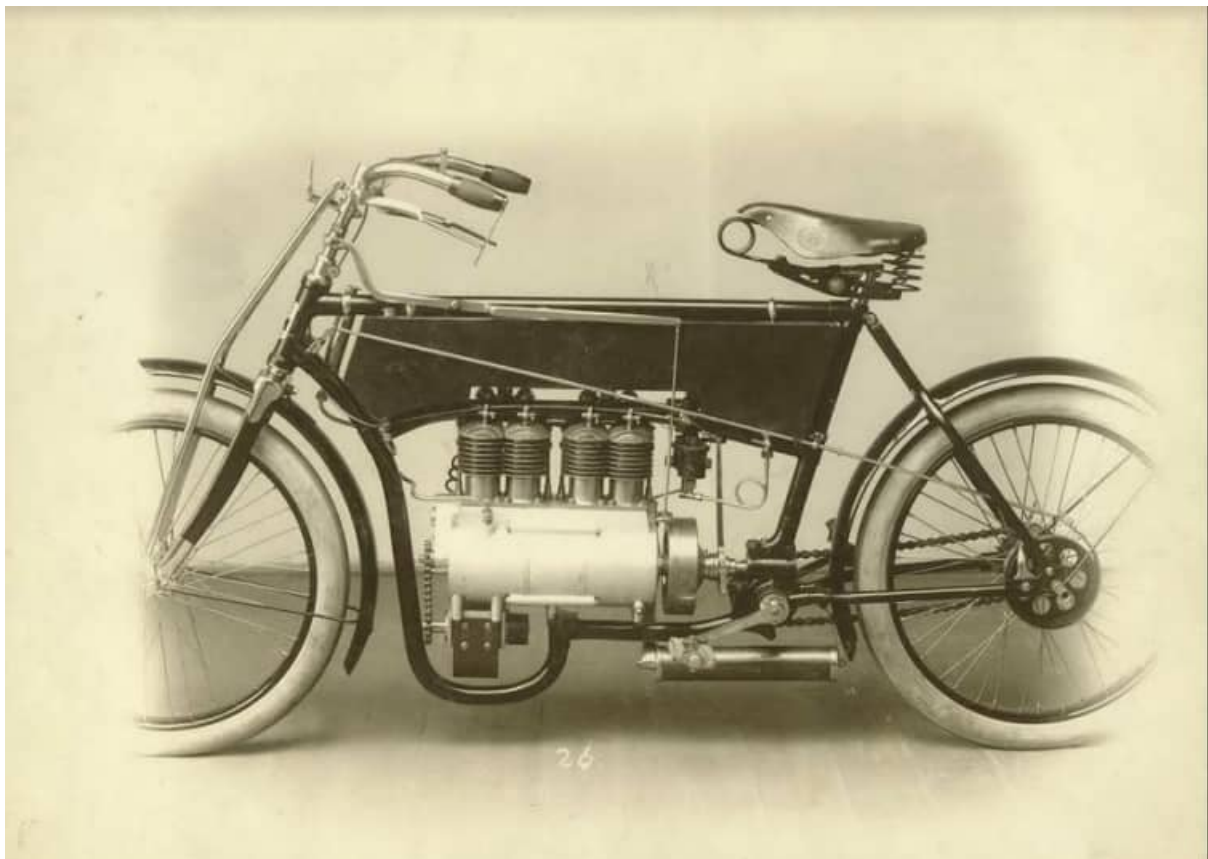
Simultaneously, the car trade was changing under similar pressure, and ere long the cheap baby car made its appearance. It could never tempt the sporting type of rider. But the leisurely potterer soon found himself able to pick up a part-used baby car at the price of a decent motor cycle, and if he had a wife or sweetheart the transfer often appealed to him.

So the sidecar and the pillion lost some of their appeal, and motor cycling tended to become the hobby of the sportsman or the traveller who could not afford the higher first cost and heavier maintenance charges of a small car.

Technically, motor cycles continued to improve at a very rapid rate. During the War the urgent demand for light aero engines had inspired research in air-cooling, regardless of cost. Aviation engineers had made innumerable advances both in metallurgy and the perfection of air-cooling many of which were commercially applicable to motor cycling. The speeds of the TT races increased substantially from year to year, and were reflected in the superb performances of commercial motor cycles. British machines rapidly established a supremacy and were literally without rivals anywhere in the world, while our lavish programme of road trials and races soon raised our riders to a parallel eminence.

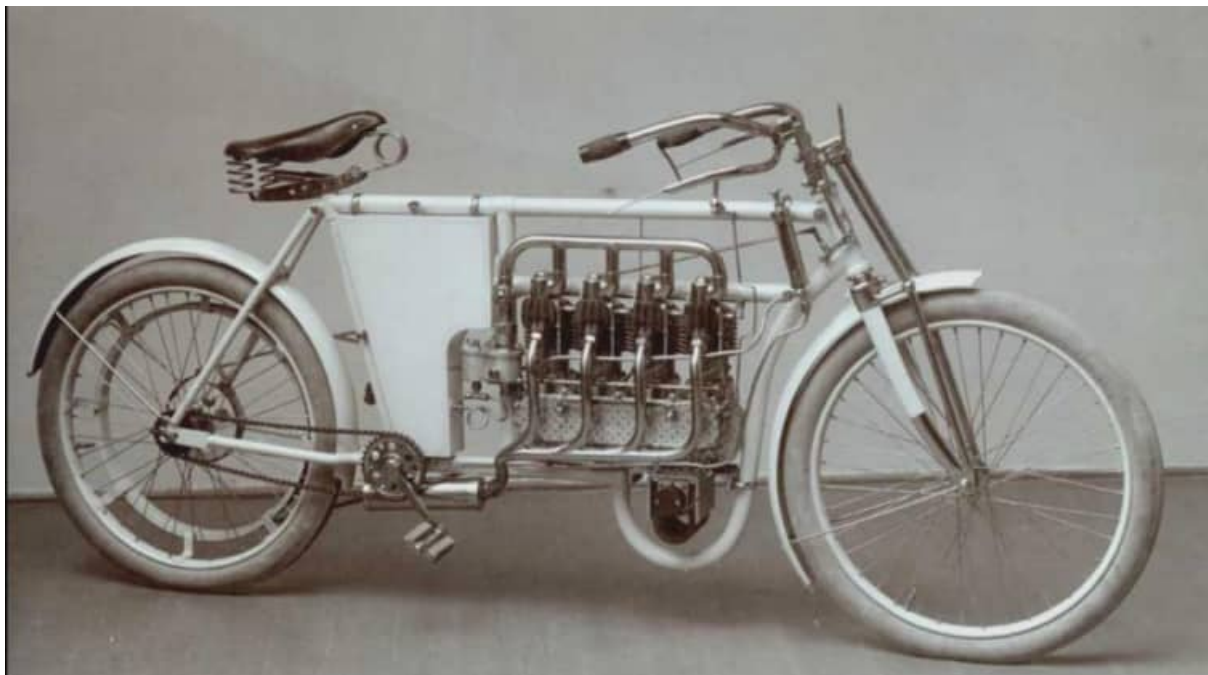
At all Continental speed events British machines and British riders showed themselves absolutely invincible, and Continental engineers began to copy our designs in the most unblushing fashion. More than one Continental nation found itself too impoverished by the War to develop large sales of cars among its nationals, and was thereby driven to regard the possibilities of the motor cycle very seriously indeed. So motor cycling came to be fostered in various ways. Lightweight machines were relieved of all government imports in such countries, and even government subsidies were paid to leading engineering firms to assist in developing their motor cycle designs and to advertise their wares by racing.

WHILE RESEARCHING MATERIAL for this timeline I've come across shedloads of pics which lack an exact date or background information. Rather than leaving them to moulder away unlooked at, here they are. The illustrations are in an approximation of chronological exactitude; I've grouped the American pics together, ditto the pacer and Great War images, but in general this is just a box of old pics to browse through for your pleasure. Motor cycles and motor cyclists from out past, they live on in our memories. A great many of these pics appear courtesy of my chum Francois, who has an astonishing archive of motor cycle photos and postcards including many from France, Germany and the USA. Many more of his illustrations may be found in the Leicester Phoenix MCC's excellent site [lpmcc.net](http://lpmcc.net) which is required reading for any touring/rallying enthusiast. Francois' contributions are to be found in the galleries of rally badges/reports and, primarily, in his commendable *Memories of Yesteryear*. I'm obliged to Francois and to Ben at [lpmcc.net](http://lpmcc.net) for allowing me to reproduce the *Yesteryear* series which you can enjoy via the main menu. I update this gallery regularly so you might care to take a regular look-see. If you happen to have information on any of these pics for use as captions, or indeed pics you'd like to see included get in touch via [motorcycletimeline@gmail.com](mailto:motorcycletimeline@gmail.com).



This tidy in-line four appears here, rather than in the timeline proper, because I knew nothing about it until Czech enthusiast (and fellow Ixion aficionado) Josef identified it as a Laurin & Klement. Josef reports that the firm had been making motor cycles since 1898 under the Slavia banner. He adds that this was the company's second four so I did

a little digging and t'other L&K four appears below. Mnohokrát děkuji, Josef, jezděte bezpečně.



Messrs Osmont and Fossier on the racing trikes that were, for a time, leaders of the racing pack.

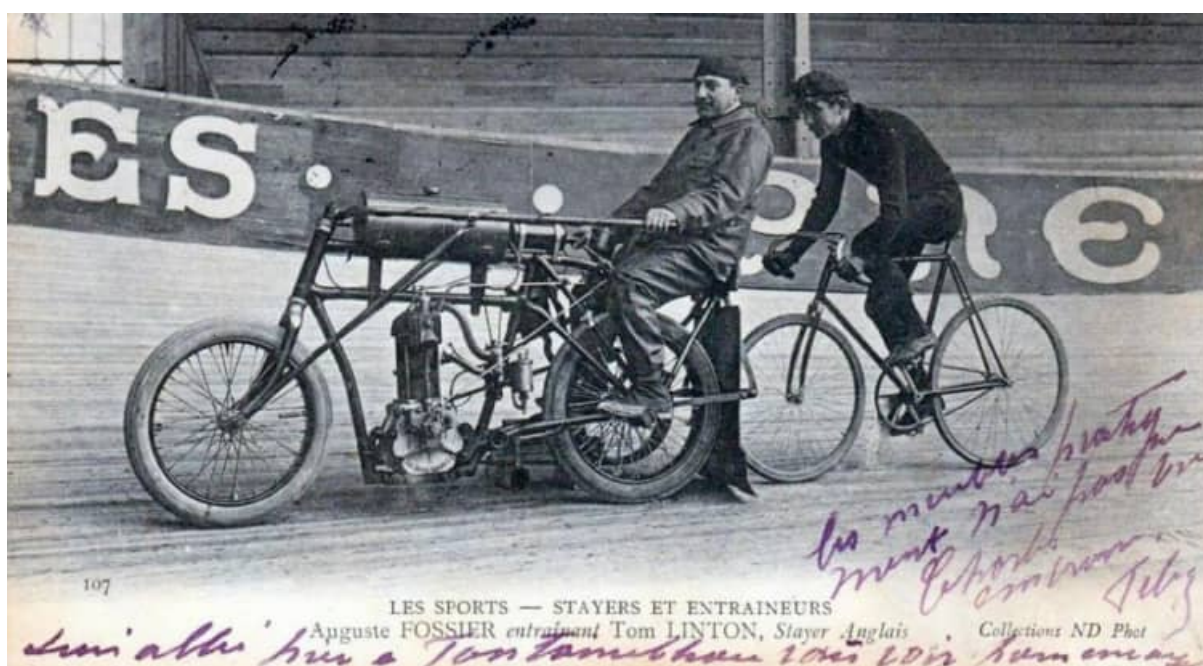


This worthy is named Rigal.

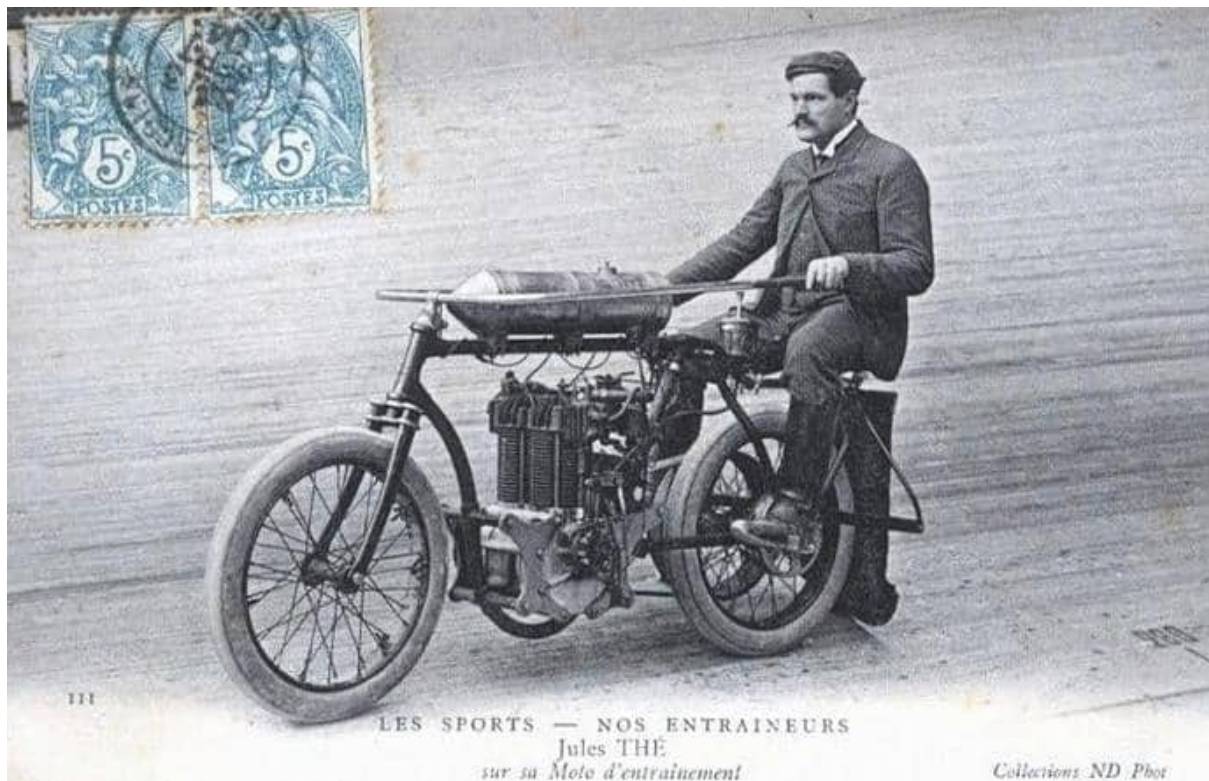




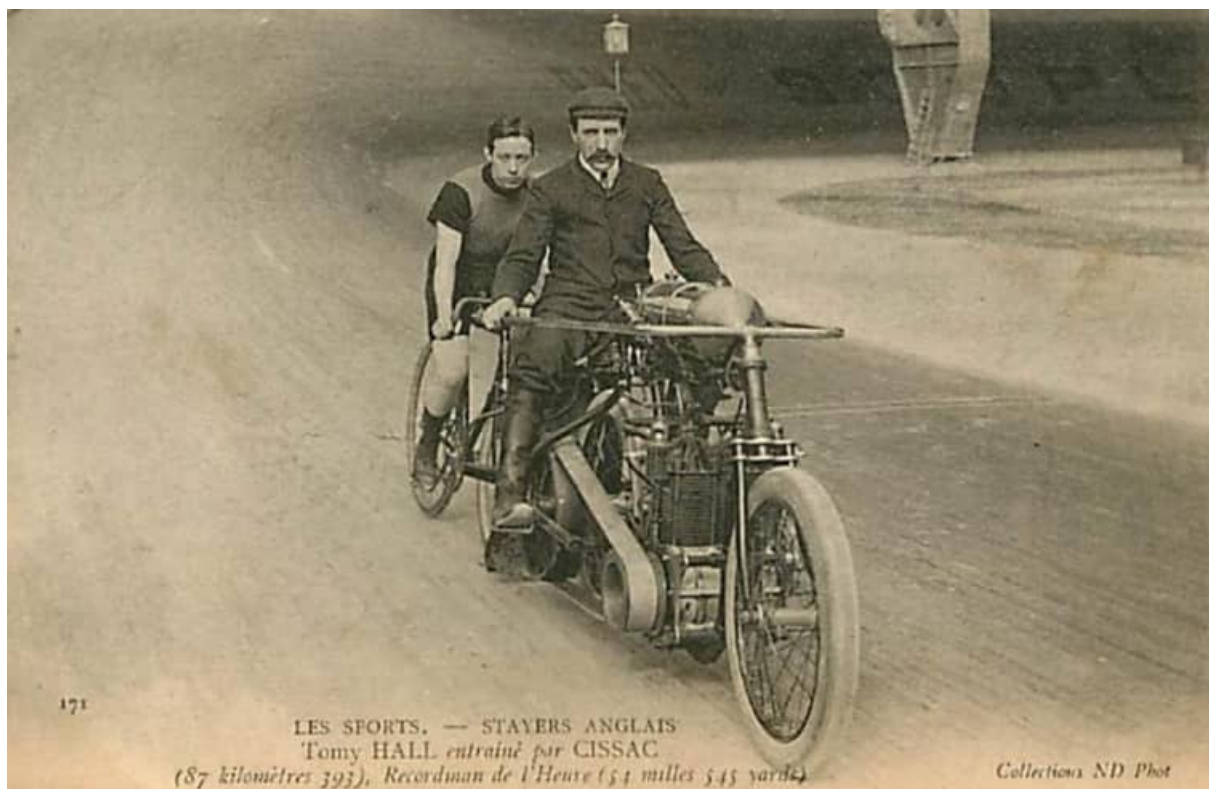
Cycle pacers used some monstrous engines to achieve the speeds they needed to fulfil their role, but judging by that lump of 2x2 this is a static posed pic. For your delectation, here's a selection of pacers...







The rider in this nicely posed shot of a pacer, Jules Thé, was equally at home on a racing motor cycle.

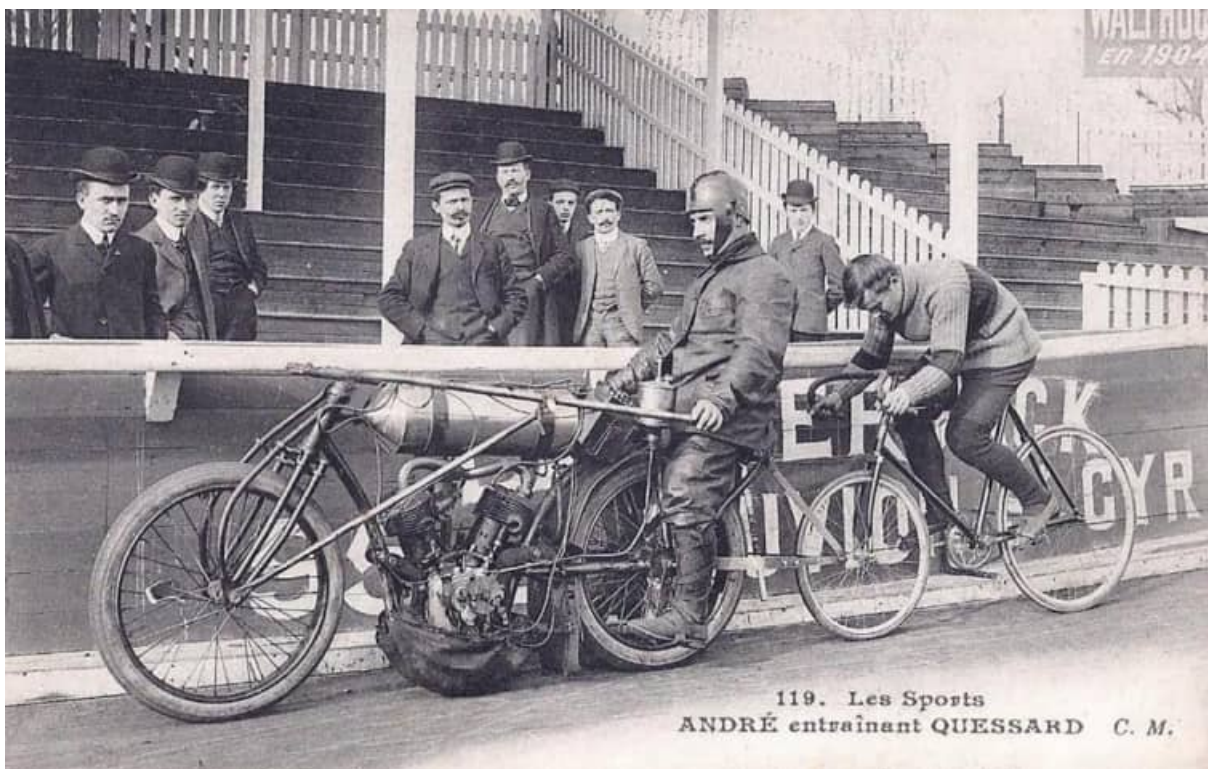


Another champion motor cyclist aboard a pacer: Henri Cissac set a number of world records (you'll find details elsewhere in the timeline) and, judging by the postcard caption he and cyclist Tommy Hall had just set a cycling record too.

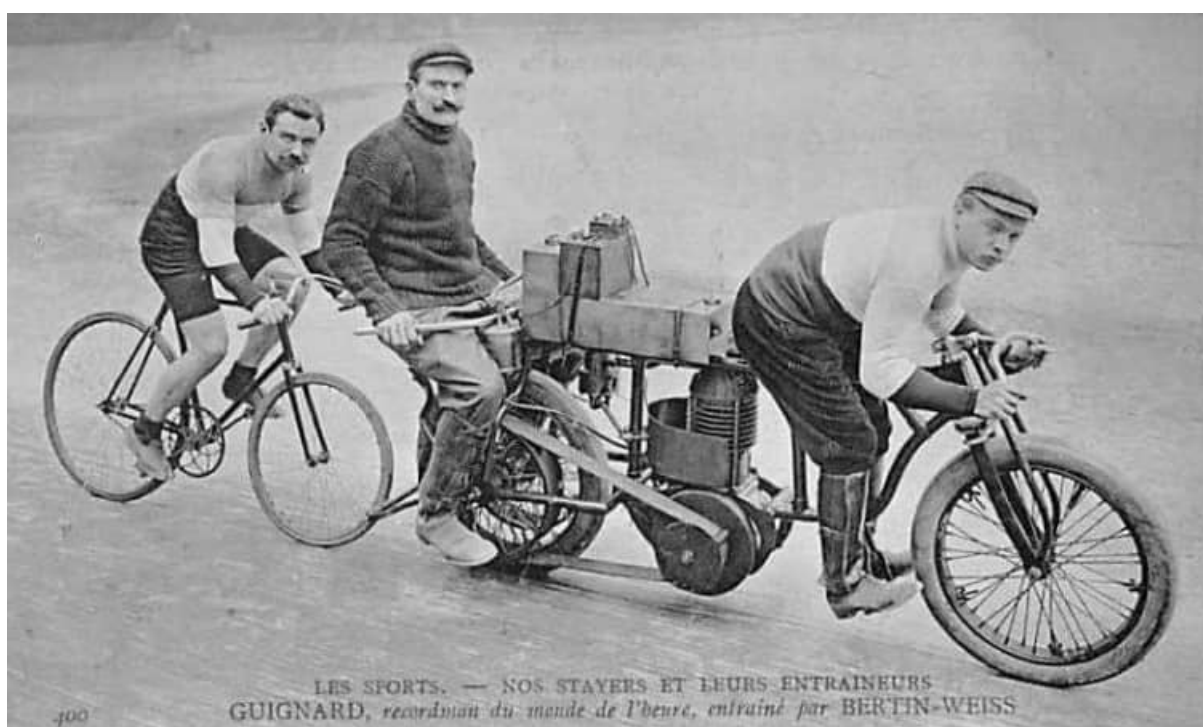




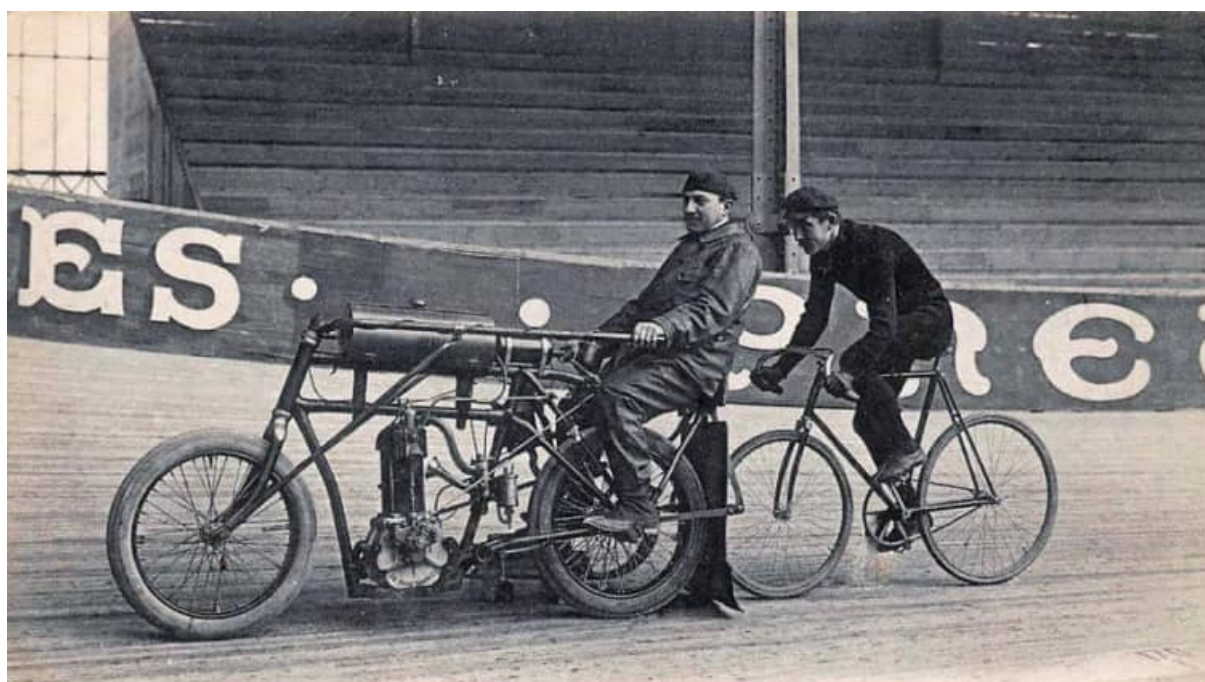
There's something of the cyberpunk about this streamlined pacer which, according to the caption on the original postcard, was dubbed 'Lucifer'. Messrs Luthier and Brunier set a world one-hour record at Montl ry; presumably the device on Lauthier's back was a receptacle for Brunier's forehead.



119. Les Sports  
ANDR  entra nant QUESSARD C. M.



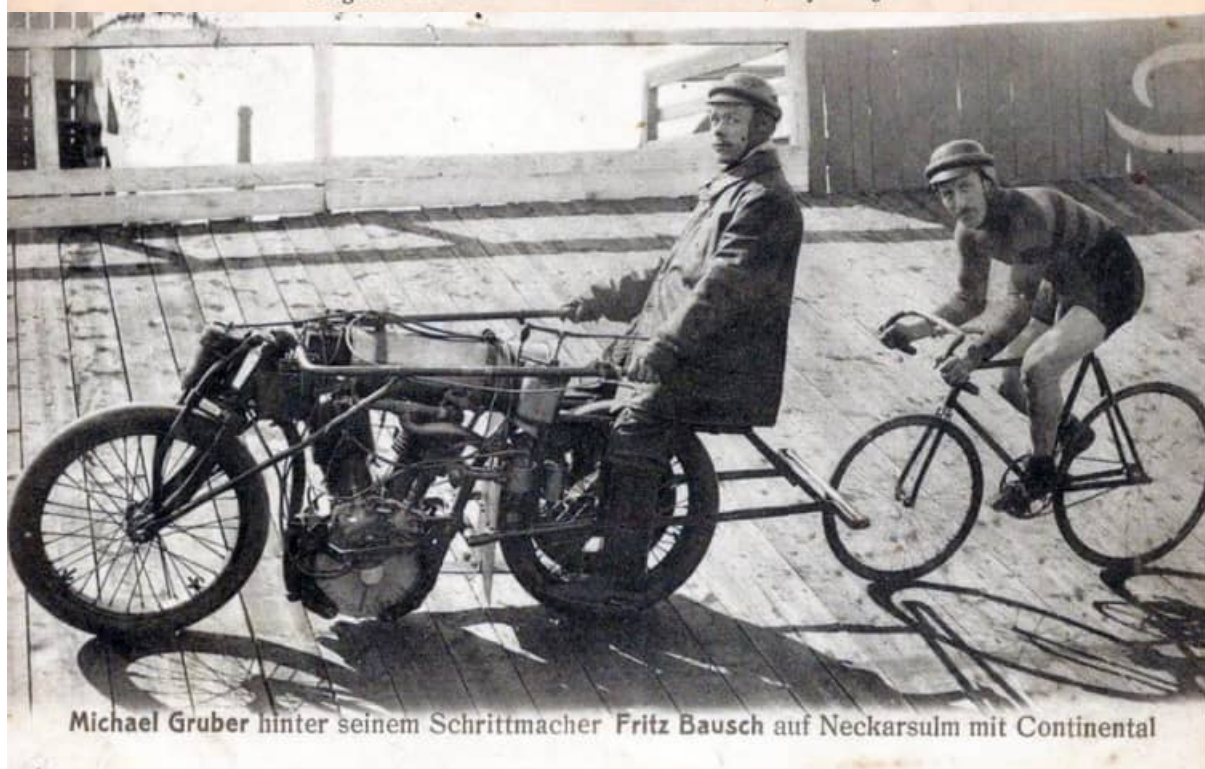




107

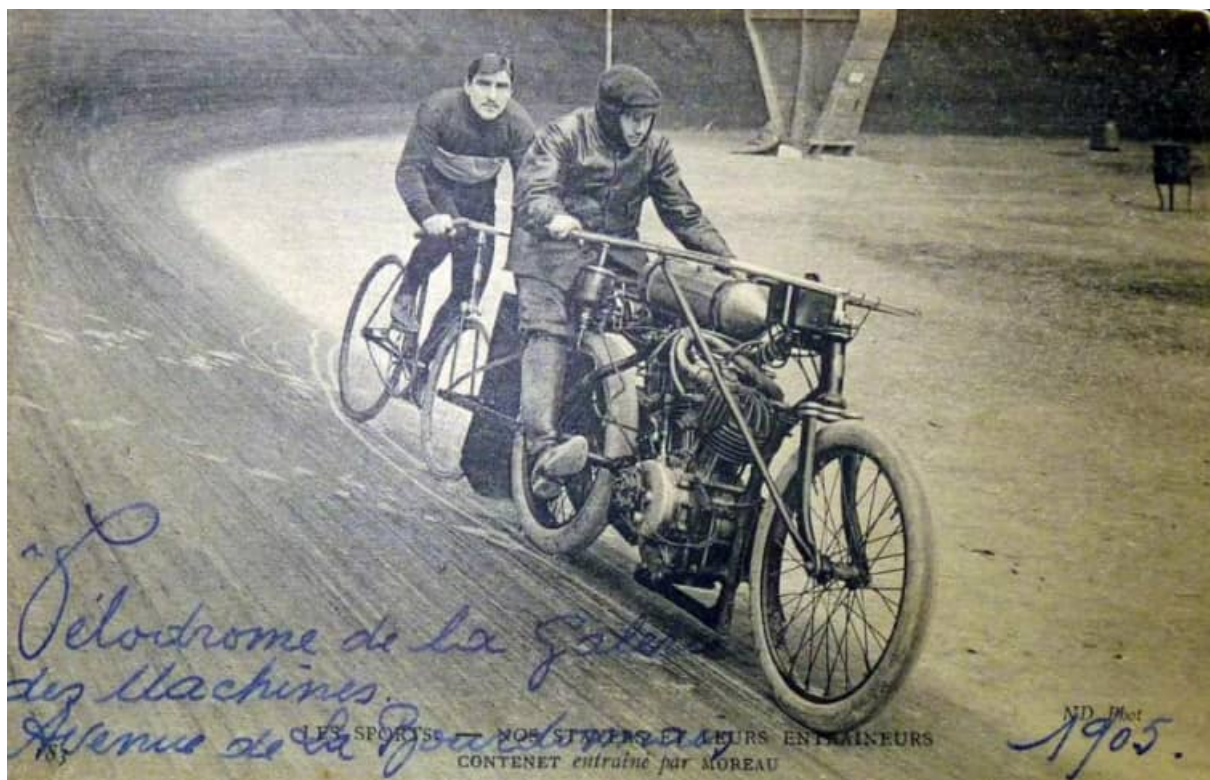
LES SPORTS — STAYERS ET ENTRAINEURS  
Auguste FOSSIER entraînant Tom LINTON, *Stayer Anglais*

*Collections ND Phot*

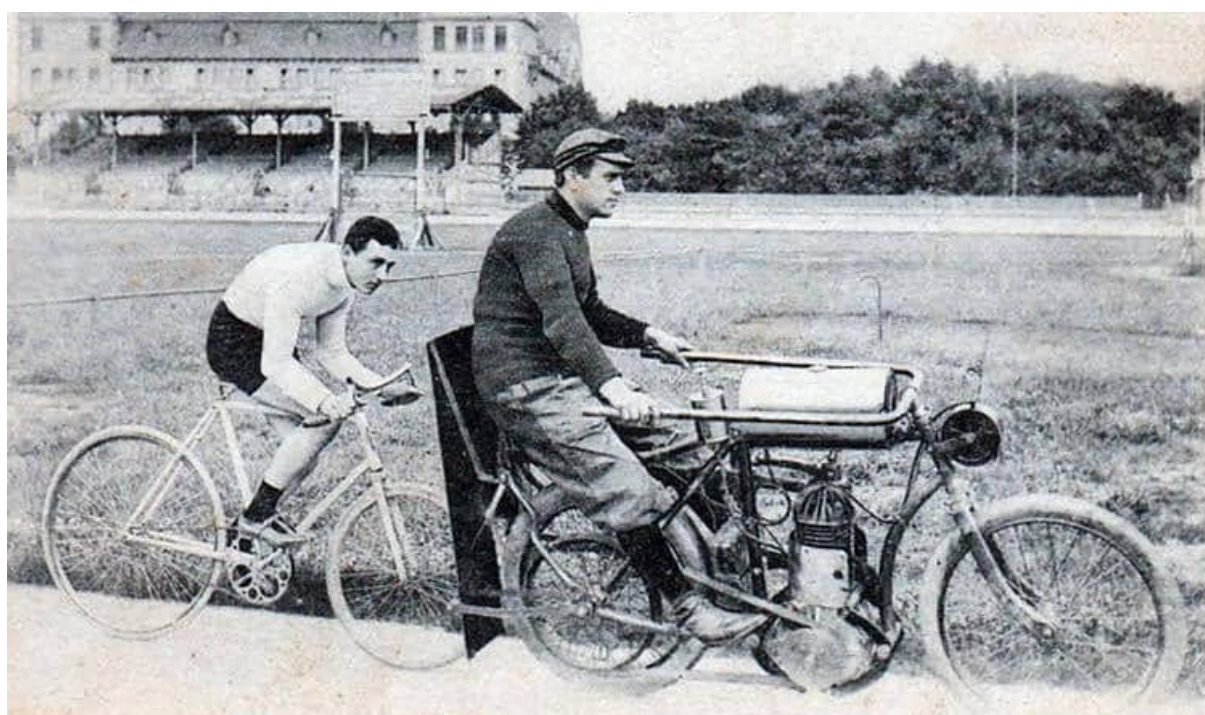
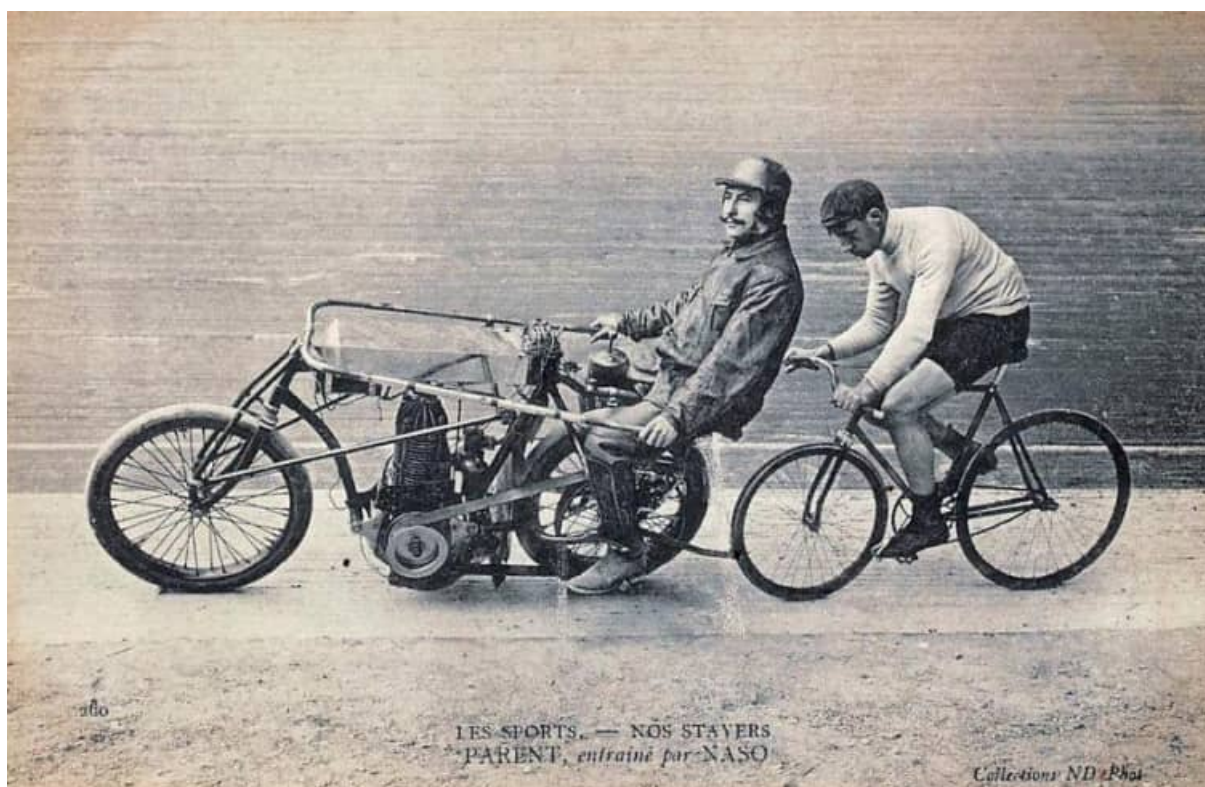


Michael Gruber hinter seinem Schrittmacher Fritz Bausch auf Neckarsulm mit Continental









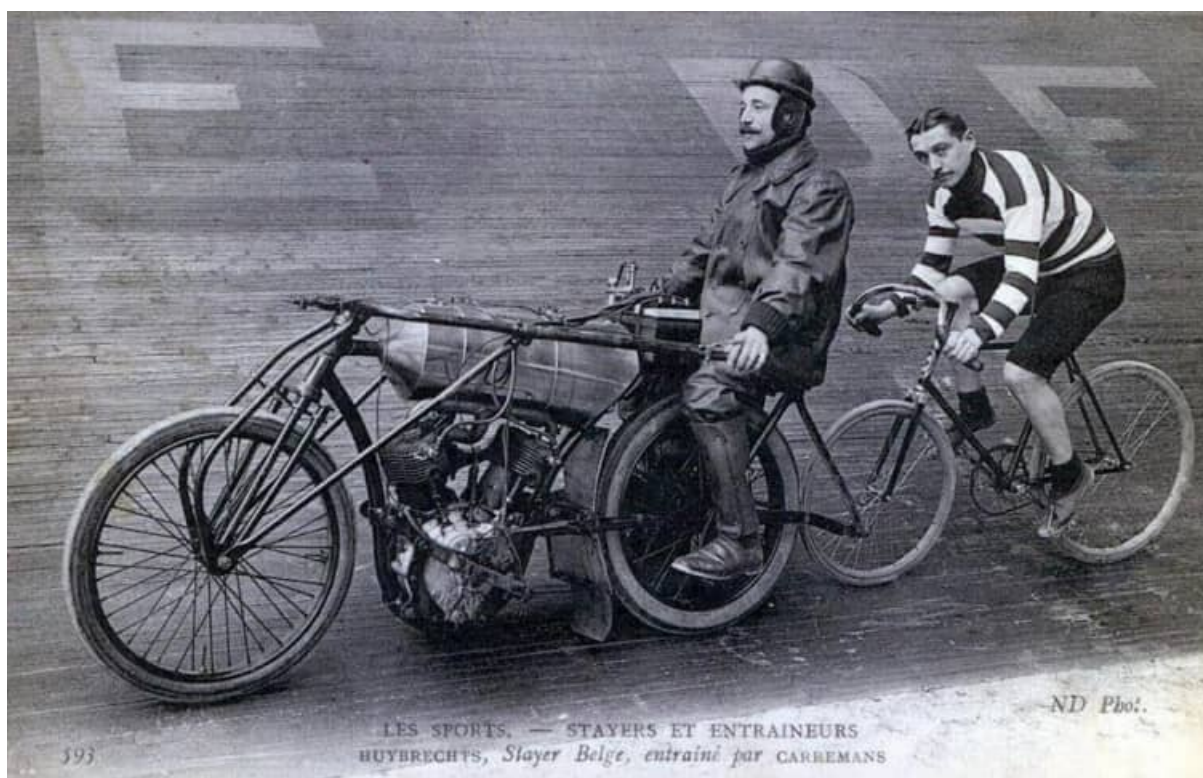




This one was taken at the Vélodrome de Tours.

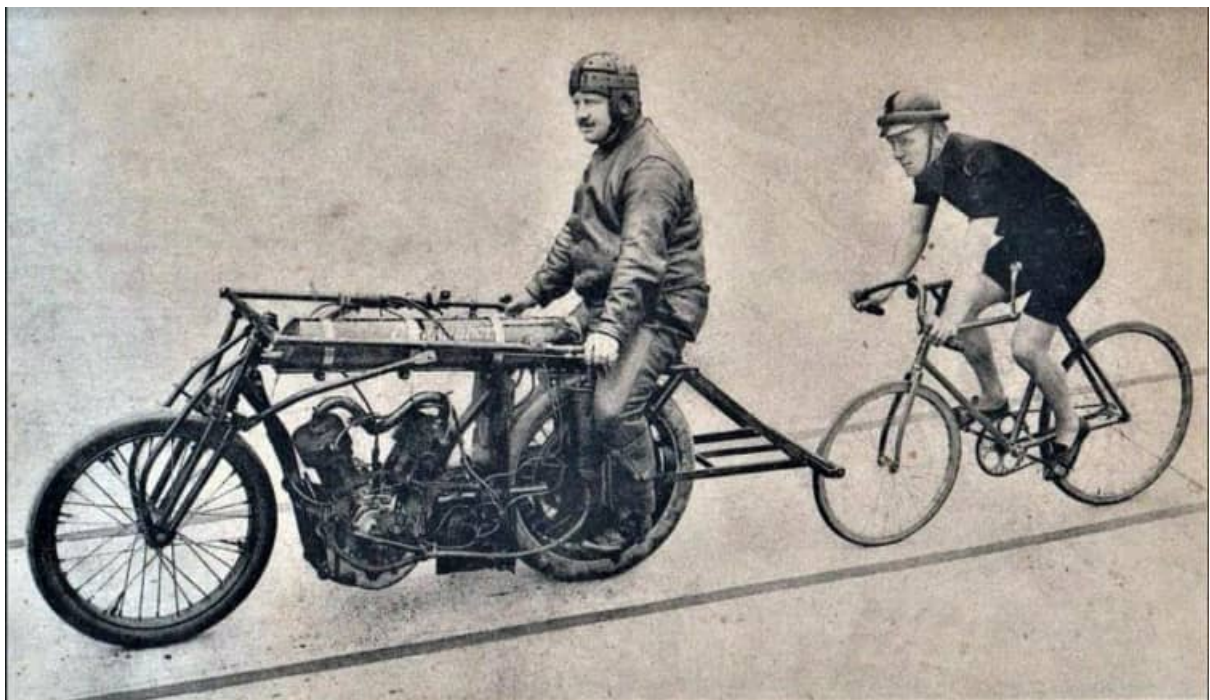












Hermann Bjeldsen geführt von Willy Hartwig





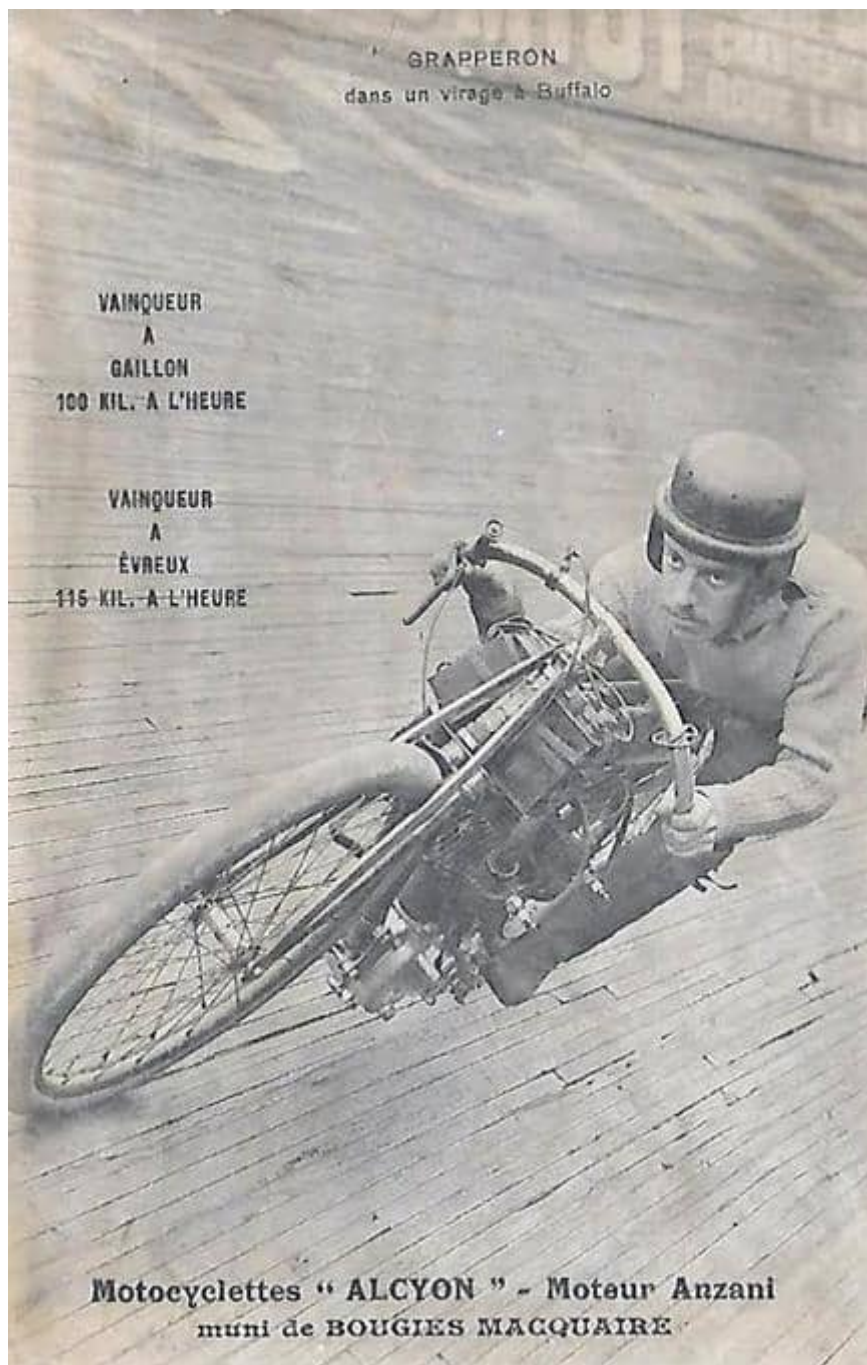
*Pacers were huge; racing motor cycles were lighter and more nimble...*



French racer Champoiseau doing his thing on a wooden velodrome.



Another velodrome French daredevil; this is M Pernette.



Andre Grapperon was a French champion boardracer, pictured here during a visit to the US aboard his Anzani-powered Alcyon. Note that he won a race at Evreux, in Normandy, at 71.4mph.



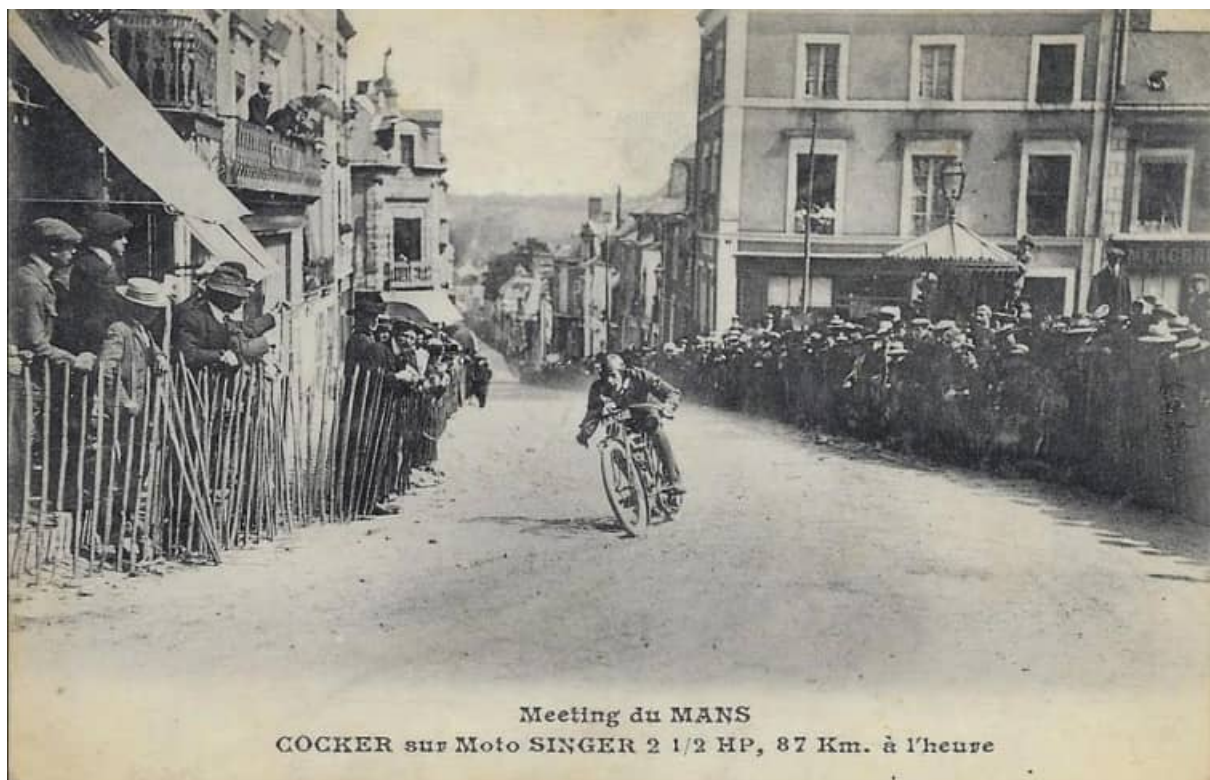


Road racing flourished on the Continent during the first decade of the 20th century; here are two more Alcyons; the rider looks much like Grapperon.





1912 2ND FRENCH GP SCHWALM TERROT





Photographer Jean Gilleta with his De Dion trike.







Ateliers de Constructions Mécaniques E. DENIS, 38, Rue Chanzy, PARIS (XI<sup>e</sup>)



*Le 5 février 1903*

**Voiturette J. de BOISSE et Motocyclette "RED STAR"**  
TOUR DE FRANCE 1903













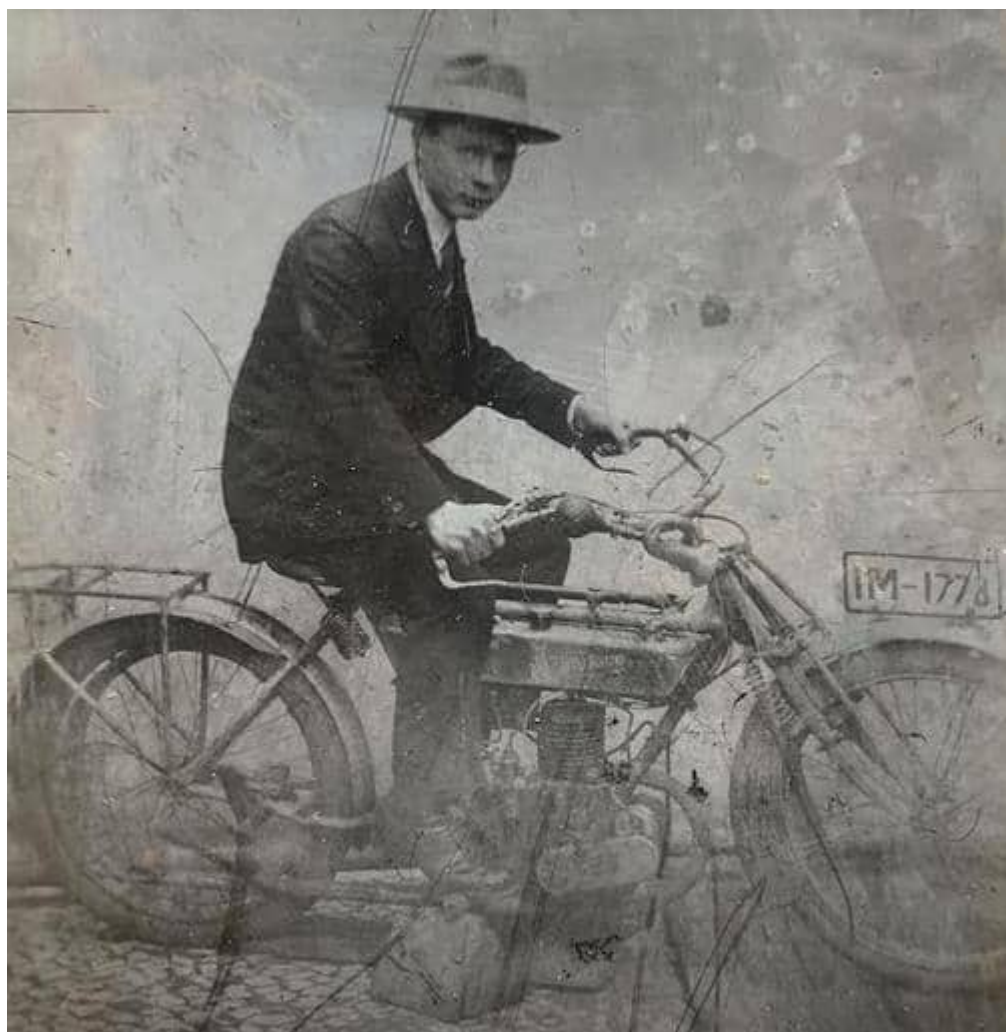




This is a 1905 Peugeot Type L.











An on-bike entertainment system, circa 1912.





This enthusiast looks proud of his Bradbury, and I don't blame him one bit.





This postcard was marked “Hull ACU Rally”. It’s clearly pre-WW1 which is decades before the first ACU National Rally; is this a Hull-based club? Let’s hope they enjoyed their run.



This bike is pictured next to a heavy haulage rig in the village of St Pardoux la Riviere in the Dordogne.





Laon, in north-west France, was the medieval capital of the Carolingian kings; it had clearly quietened down a bit by the time this rider appeared.



Carqueiranne is a seaside resort in Alpes-Côte d'Azur, in south-East France; note the hand tinted sky.





“Une entree de Paris” was the caption on this postcard.





As the postmark shows this snap dates from 1903. Finistère is on France's north-west Atlantic coast; Quimperlé is a flourishing city. The bike is a 1903 FN.





Best known of the FN family, the in-line four.

MOTOCICLETTE

BIANCHI  
LE PIÙ SICURE.

*Mille ringraziamenti saluti  
e baci. Sua affetta Gina Marco*

AGENTI per MILANO e PROVINCIA  
**NAZARI, GORLA & C.**  
VIA DANTE, N. 9  
MILANO





*Auf einem 6 PS Modell  
da geht es mit der Liebe schnell.*

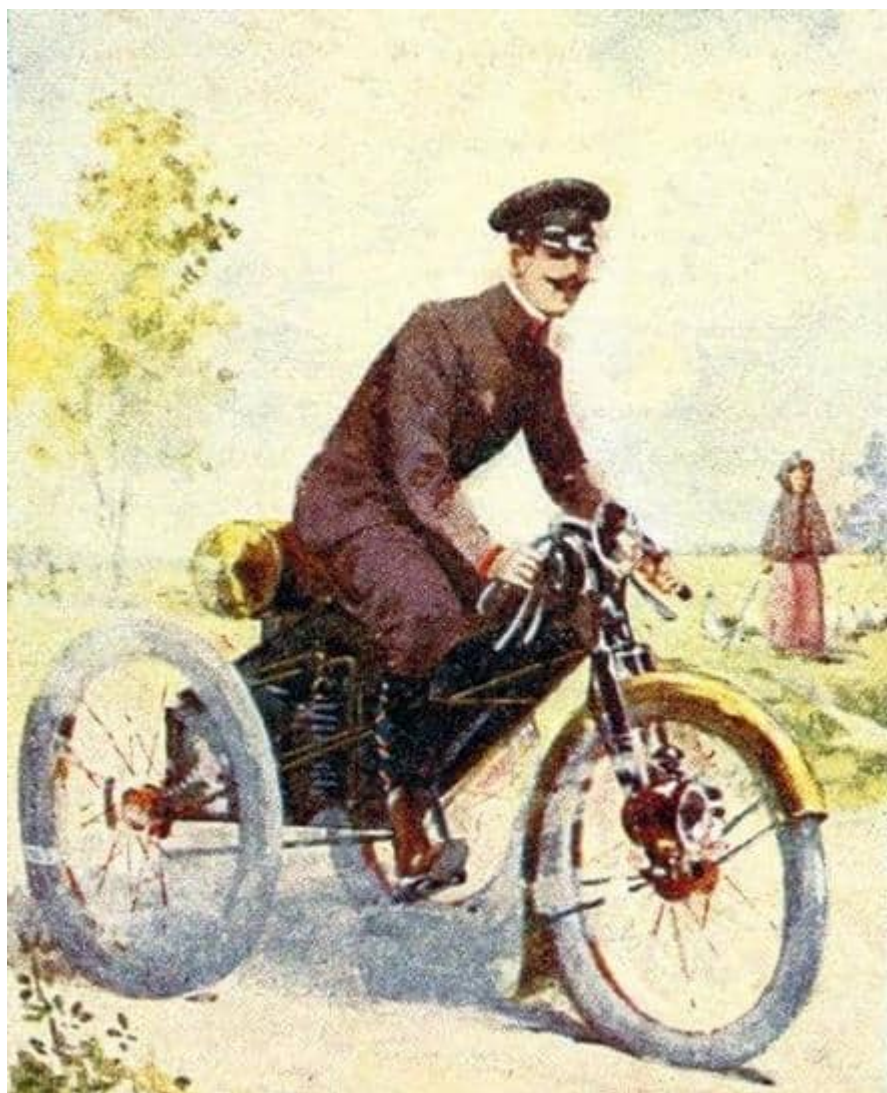




















This smartly turned out couple are clearly enjoying a jaunt on their combo, but what is it? The name on the tank is Flying Dutchman; is it a one-off? We may never know.



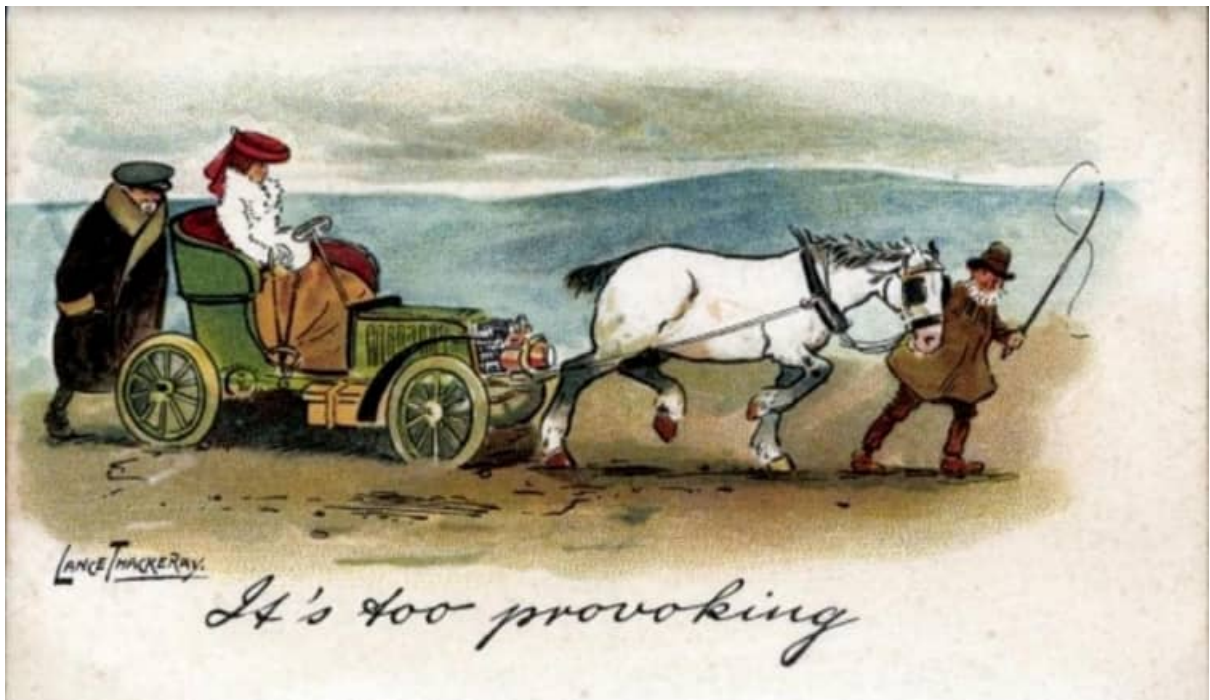


*This is what we do when the Motor  
goes wrong.*





*It's a pleasure to have a break down!*

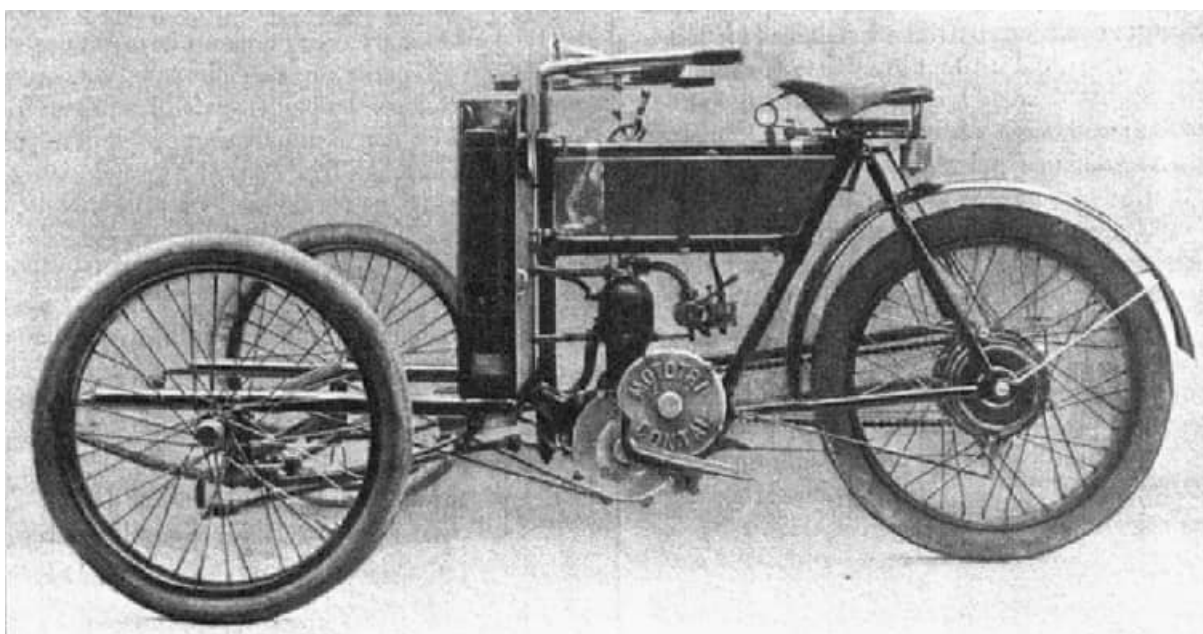
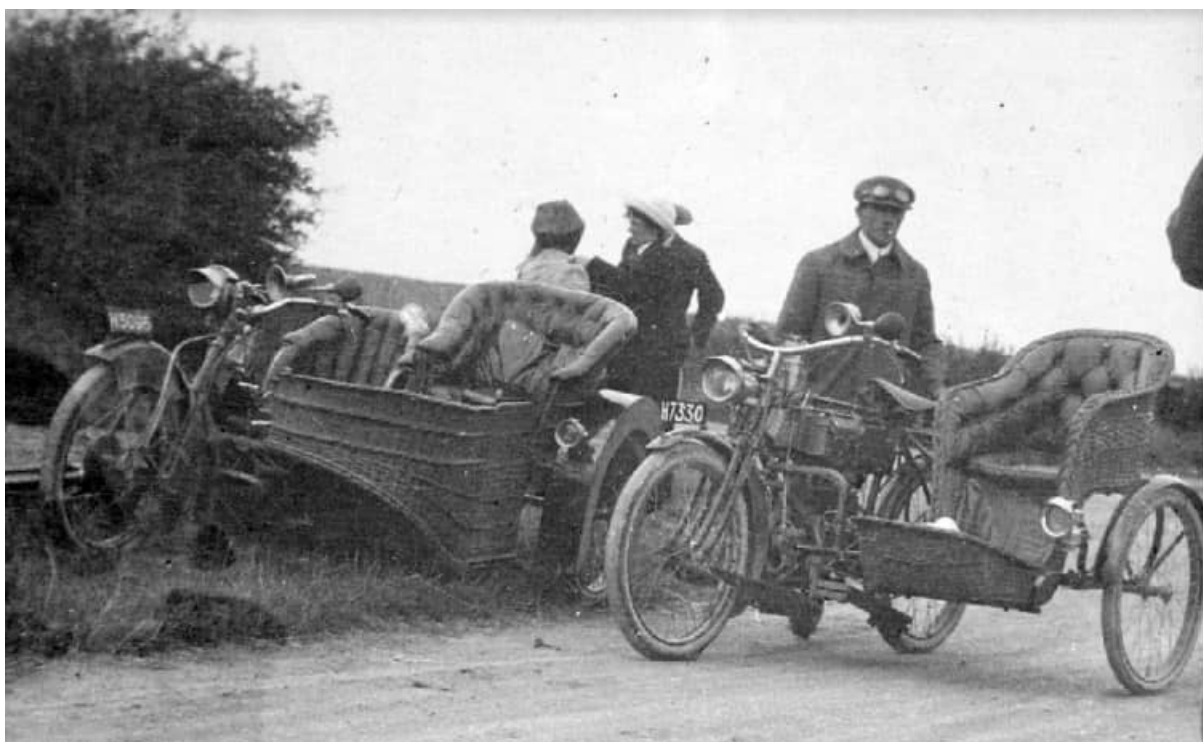


*It's too provoking*



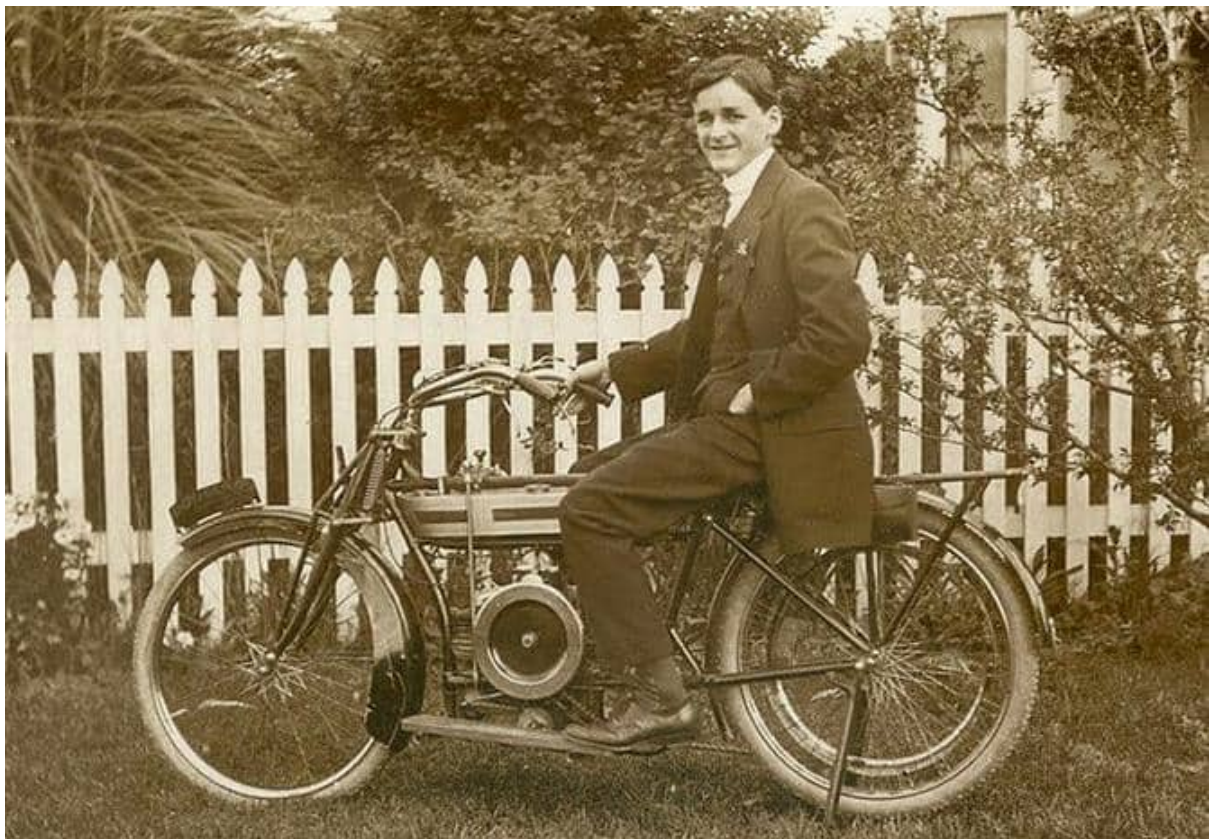


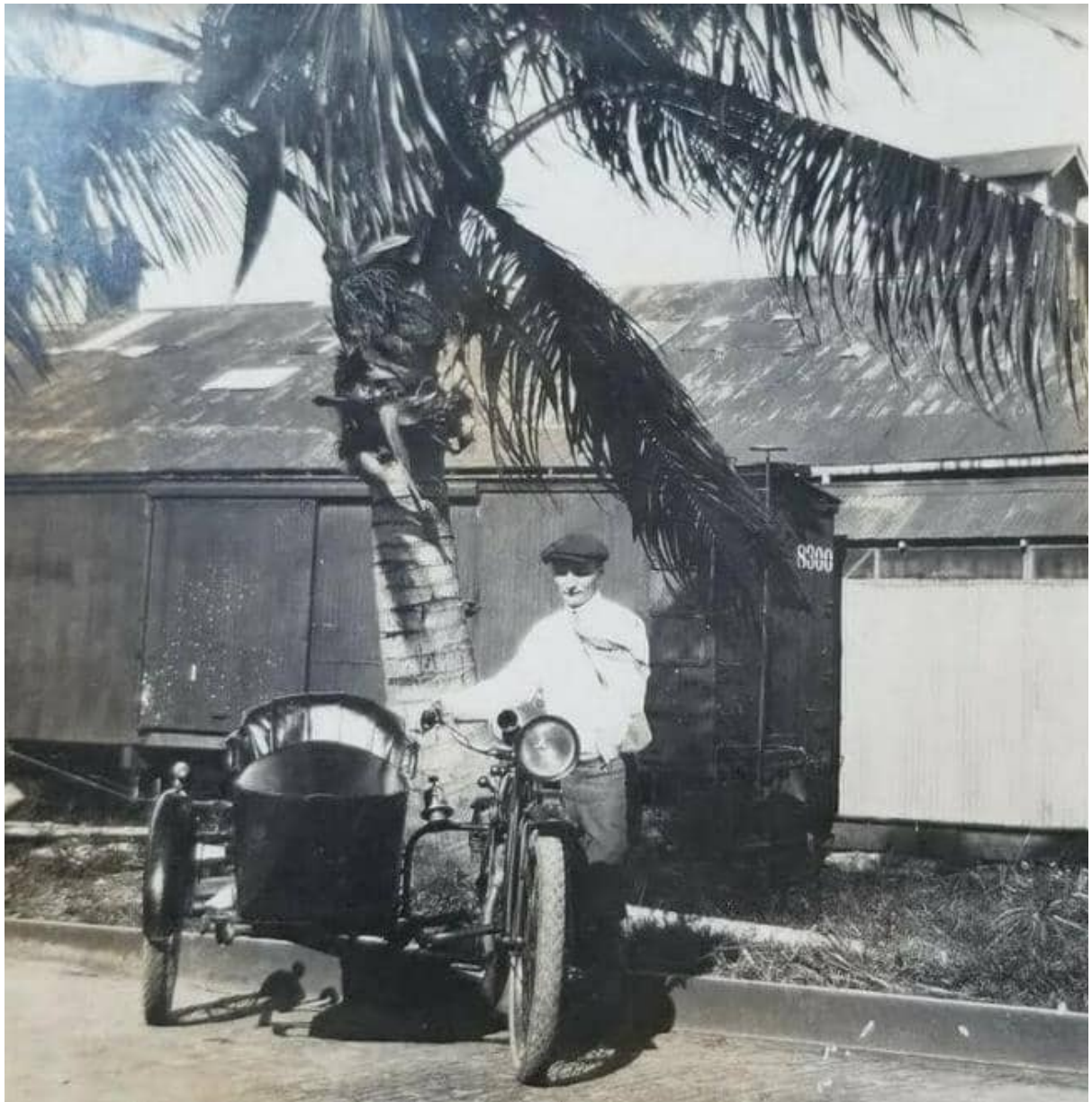




The Contal Triporteur was a familiar sight on Parisian streets with a tradesman's box up front (the Brits generally opted for tradesman's sidecars). Primarily designed for stop-start deliveries, of course, but a couple of heroes took a beefed-up version on the 1907 Paris-Peking rally. They made it home by train (find out more in the 1907 page).









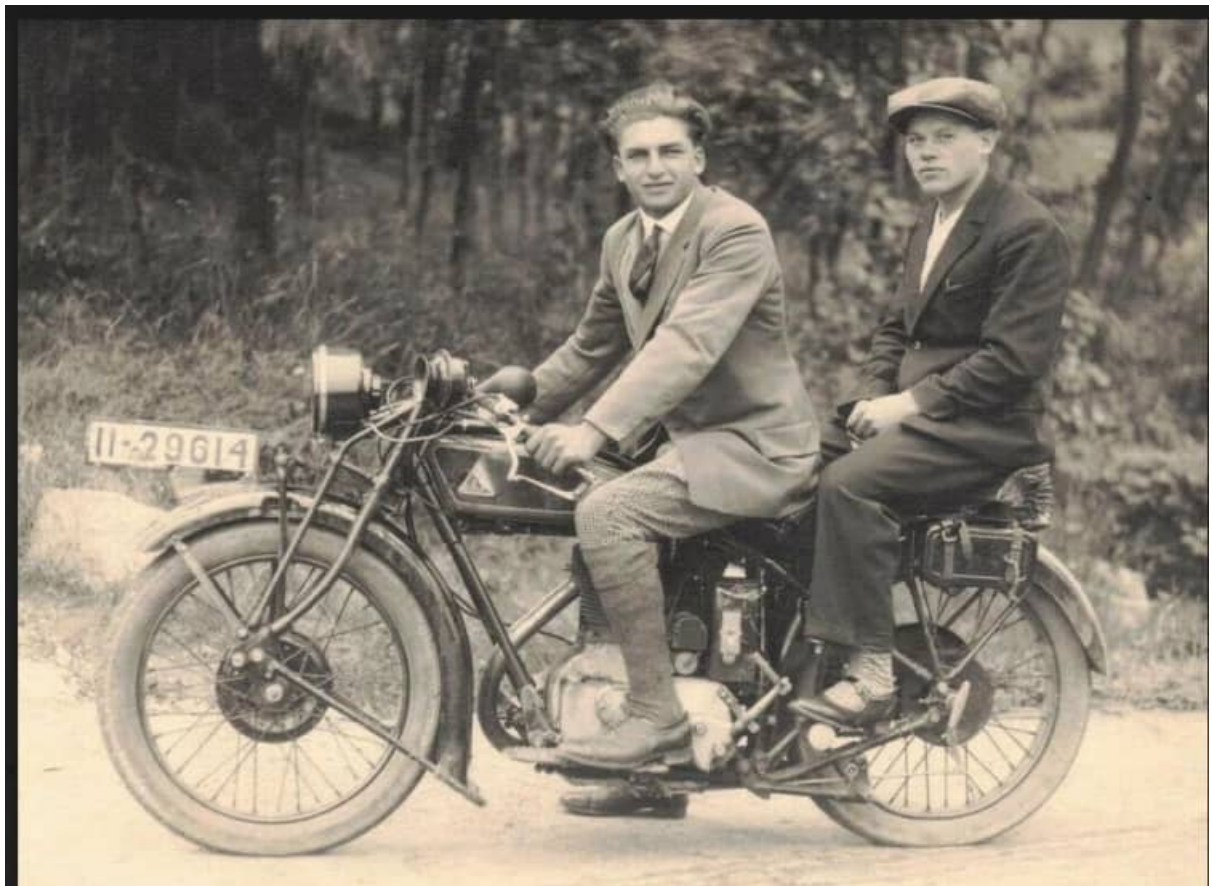








This snap was taken in Nancy and seems to show a group of posties.

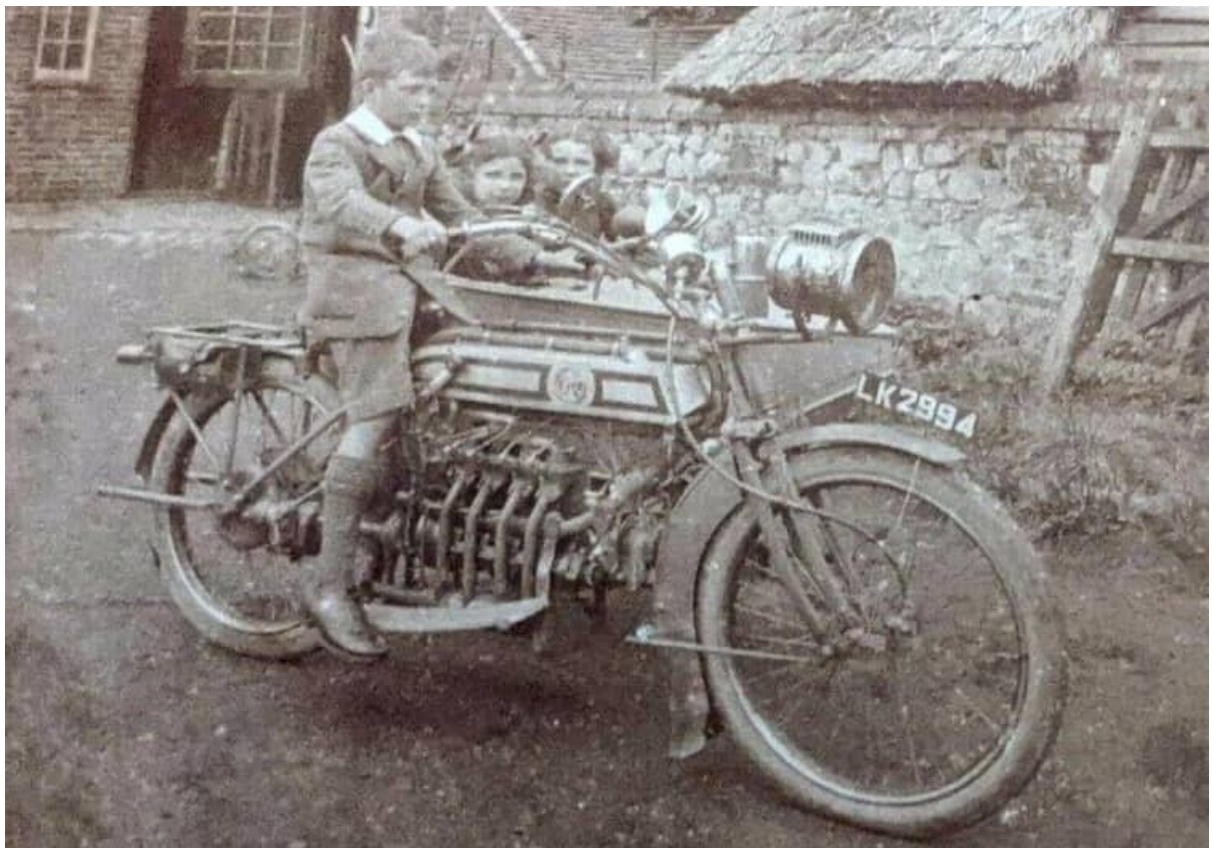












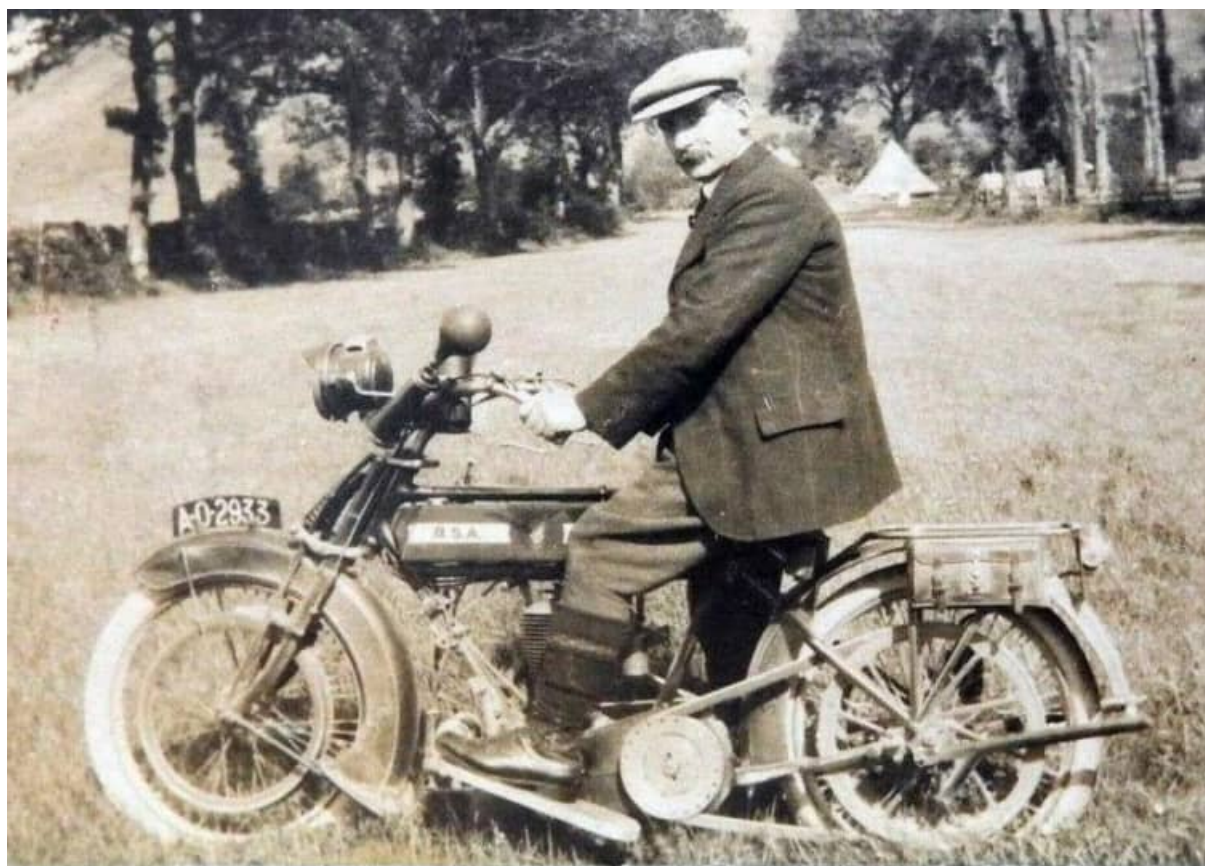


These nautical nippers are mounted on an Italian Frera, which was in production for exactly half a century from 1906; when this snap was taken it was one of Italy's leading marques.









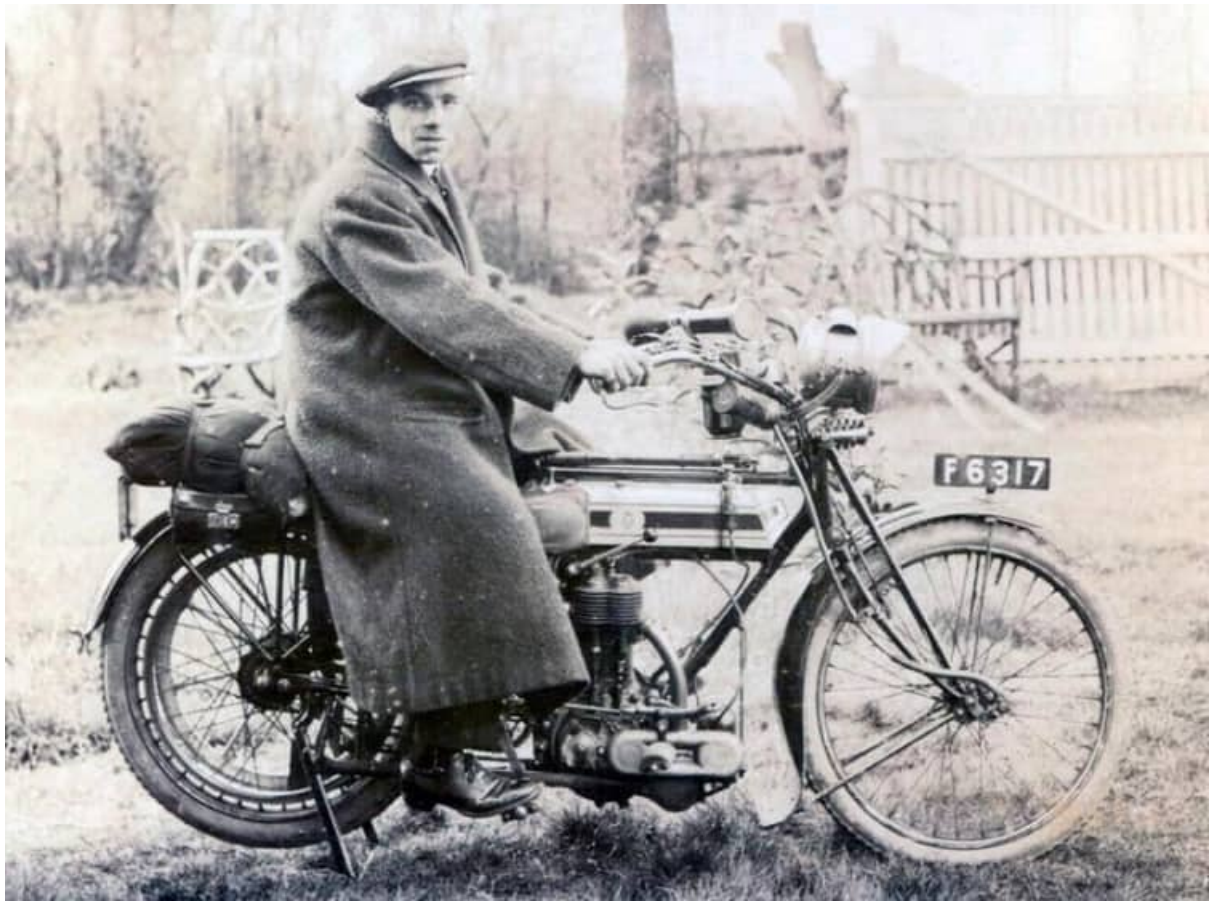










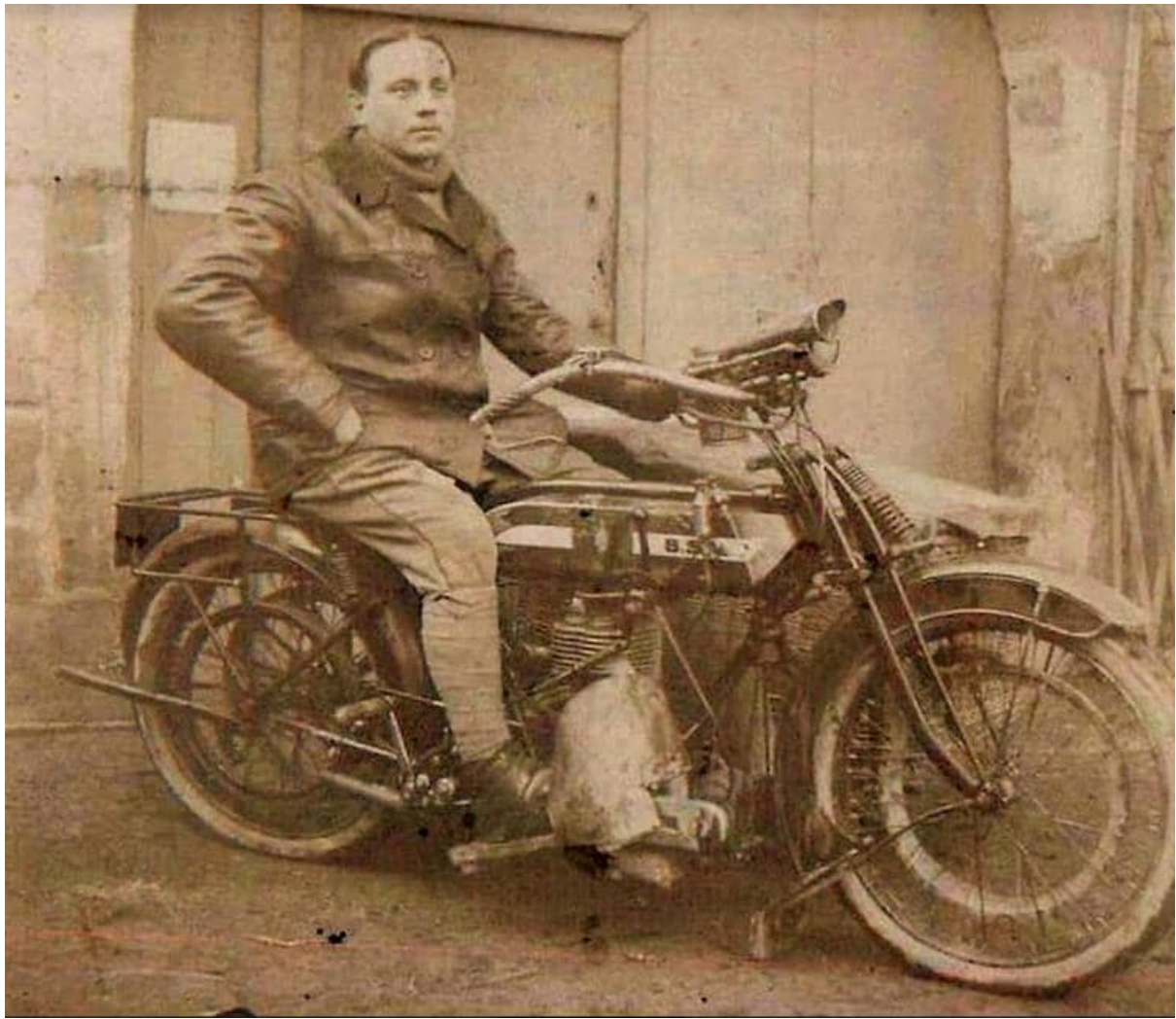






Next time you're astride a modern motor cycle and wishing you could put both your feet flat on the ground, remember that seat heights used to be lower...sometimes much lower.





Note the foot-guard (surely too small to be called a legshield) at the front of the footboard. A reminder that in those pre-tarmac days keeping road mud away from the rider was at least as important as the weather-protection gear we fit nowadays, which is why legshields were once more common than windscreens.





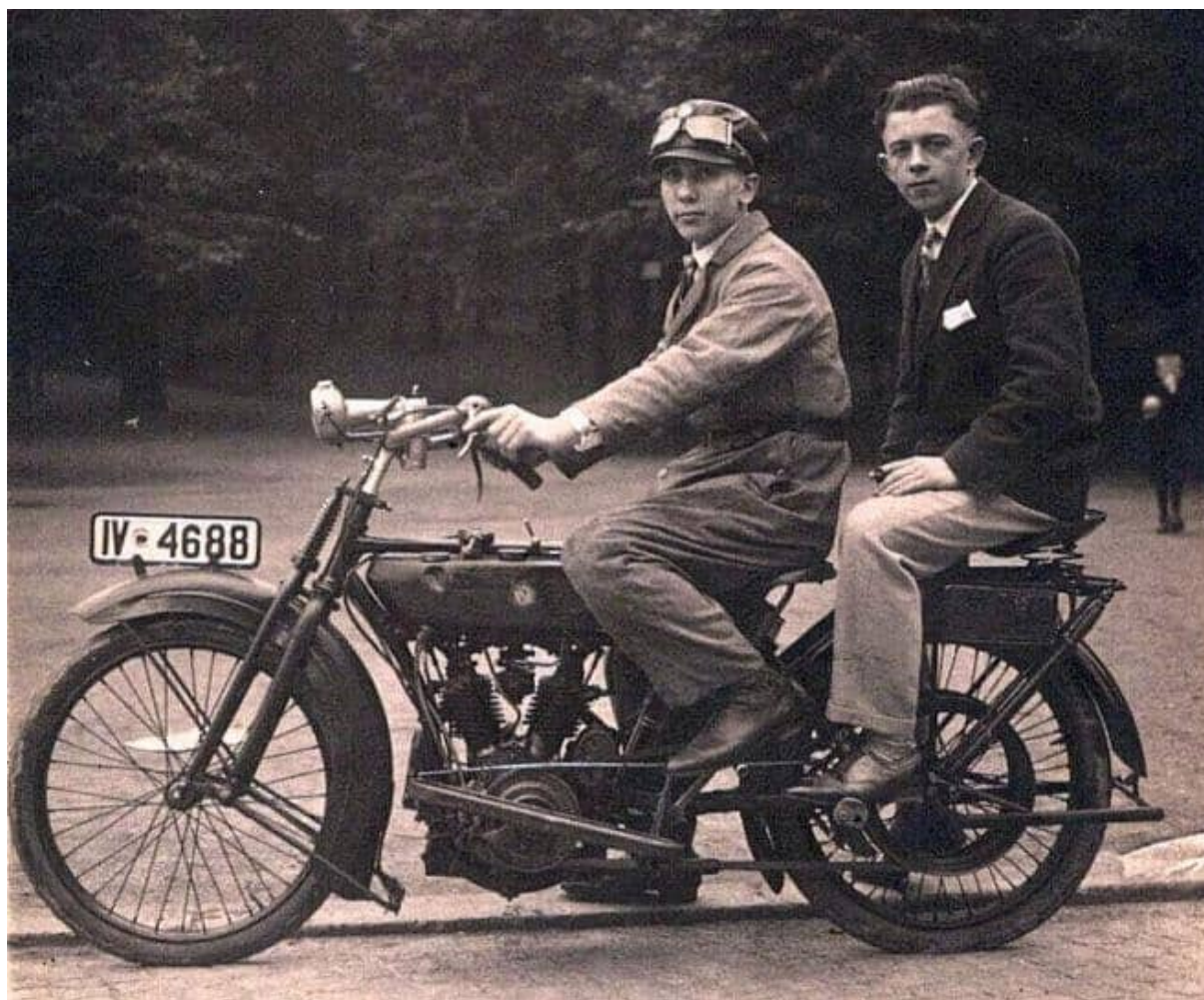
'Action' shots were hard to get in the days of whole-plate glass negatives but a French snapper managed it during this long-distance trial.



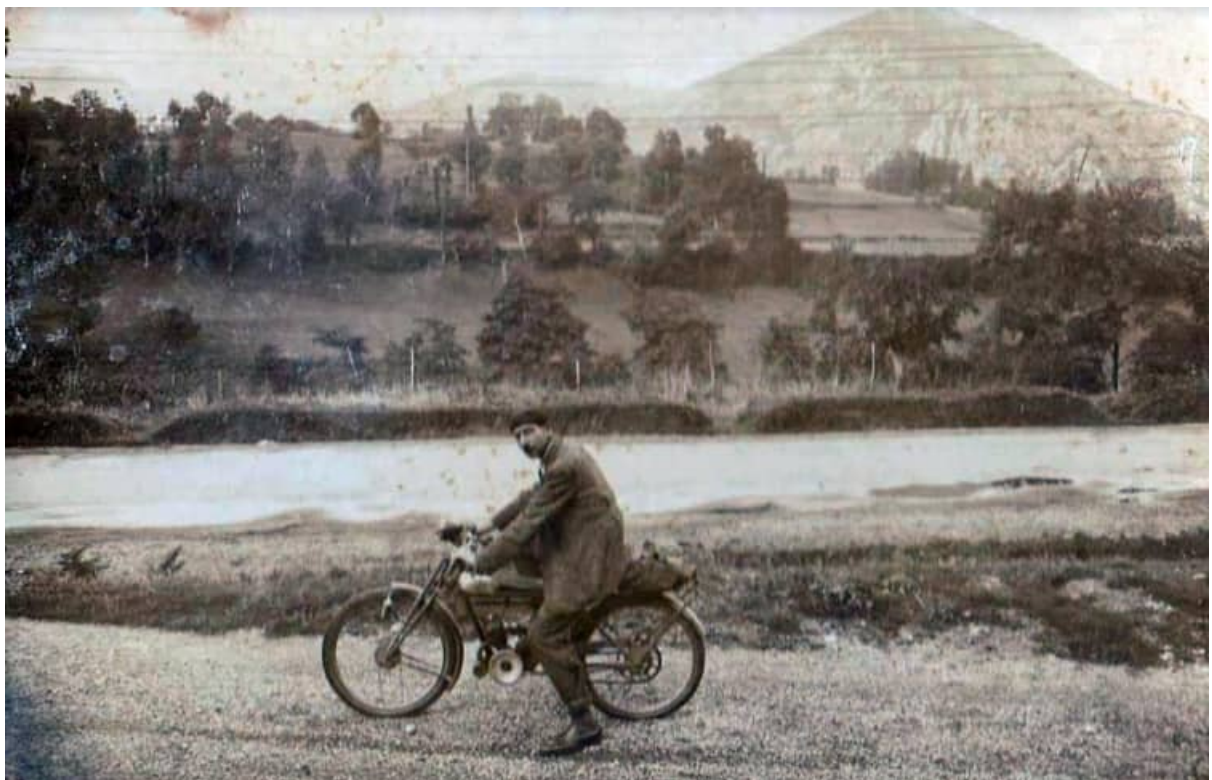














No details to hand of this group, except that the riders were members of an Ohio club.



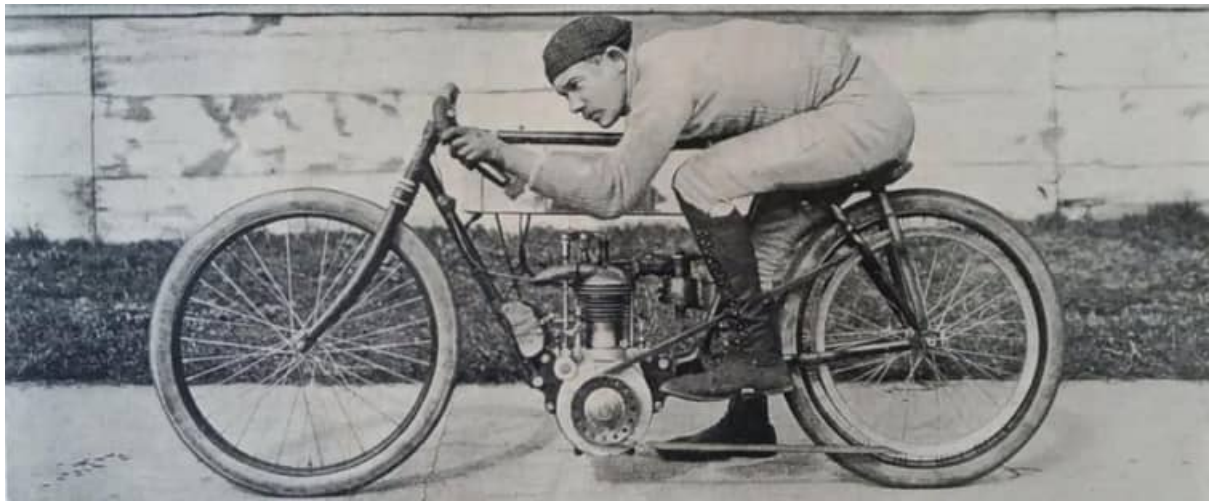


In the early years of the 20th century Peugeot twins were almost unassailable—one powered Rem Fowler's Norton to victory in the first TT—but most, of course, were installed in roadsters.



In 1909 two chaps went for a ride. I hope it was a good one.



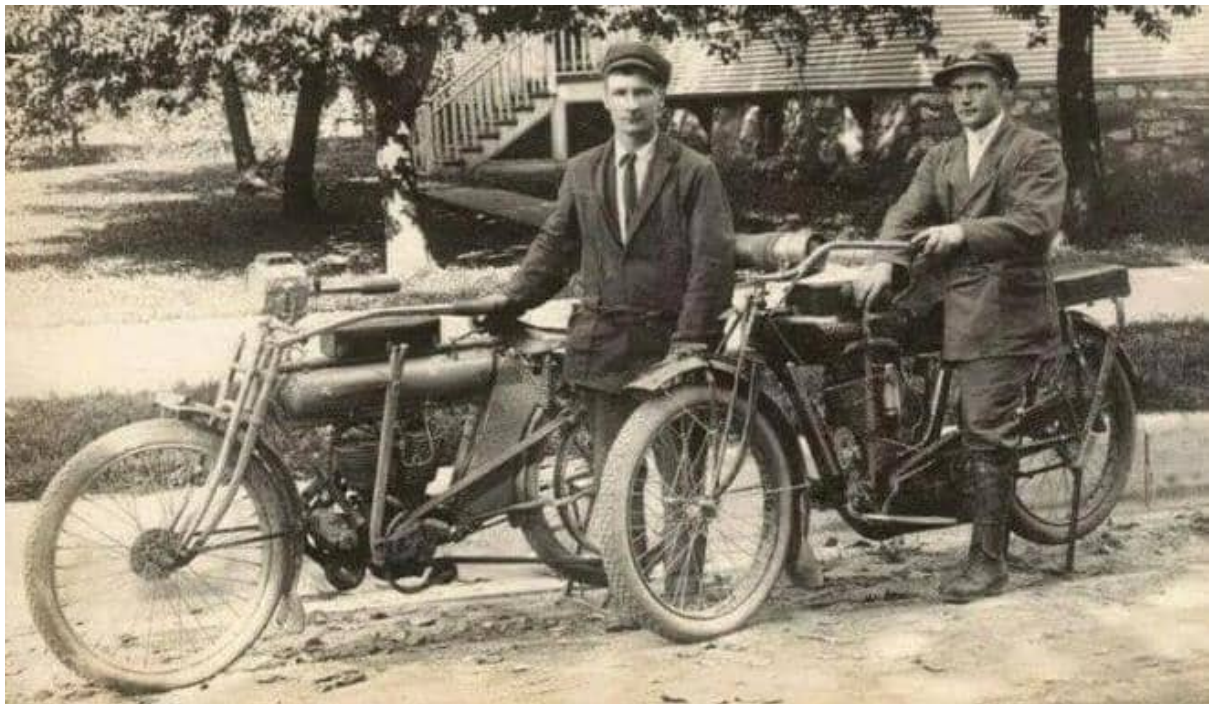




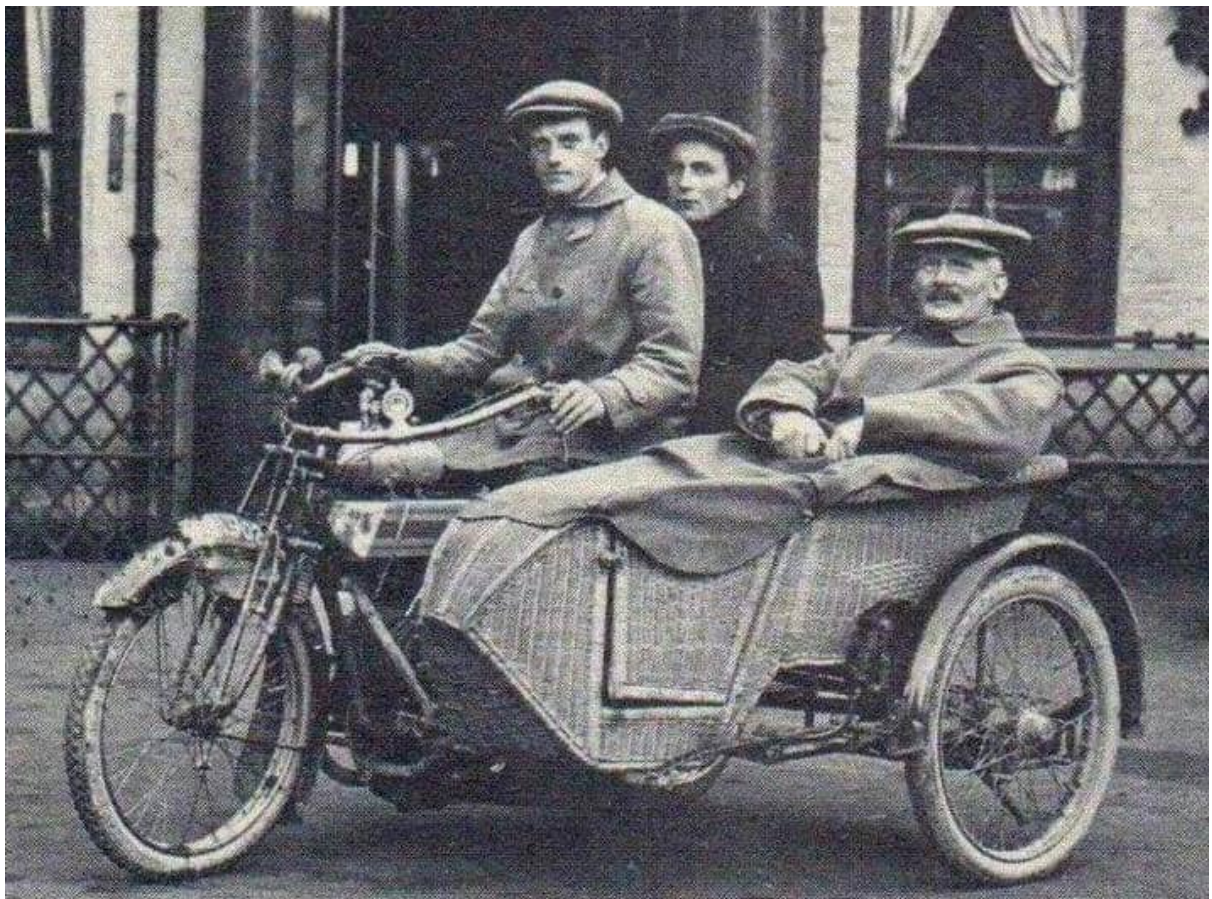
No date on this one, but the rider on that daunting velodrome is Verschaeve, 'The demon of Liege'.











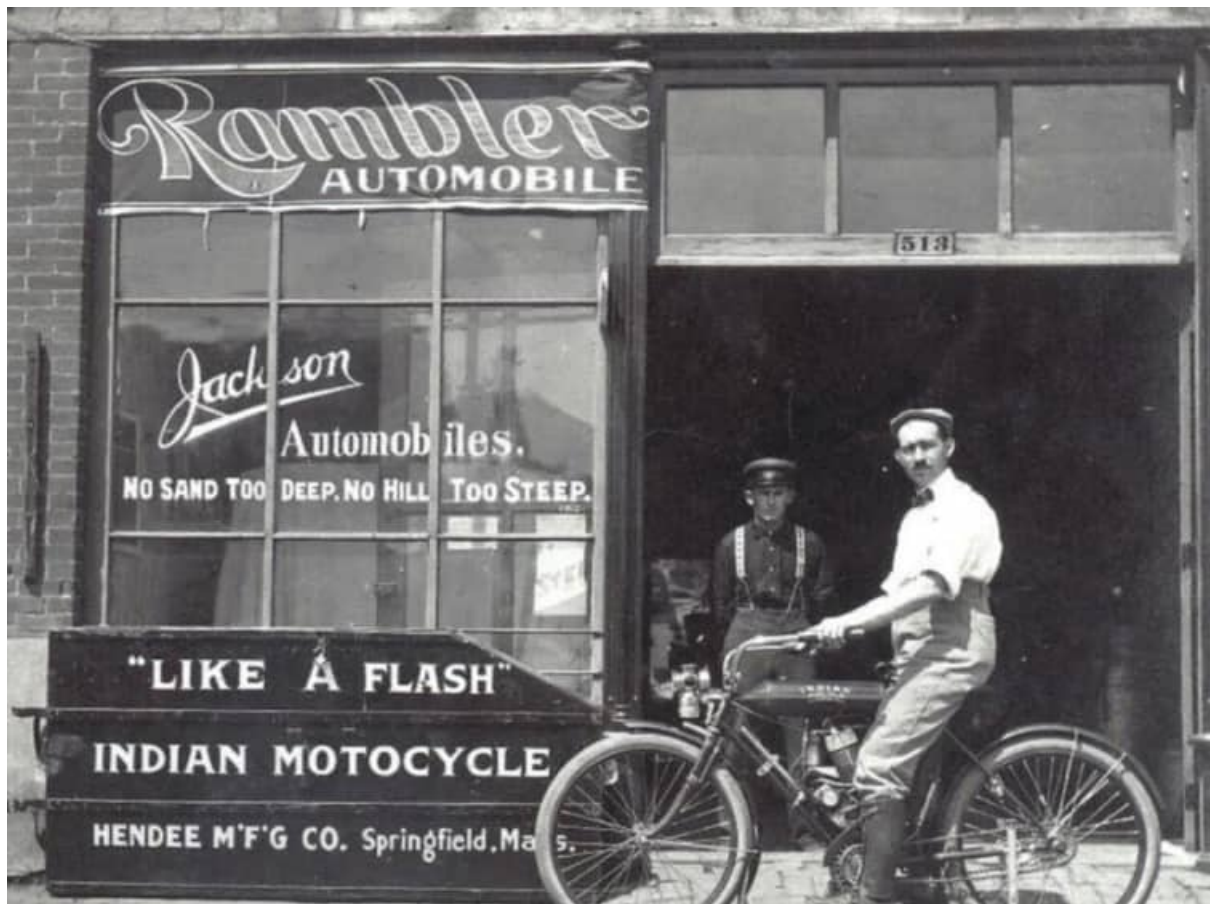








Our colonial cousins to the west of the pond have a rich motor cycling heritage...



“No sand too deep, no hill too steep”...the freedom of motor cycling...



...Here are some more members of the Indian tribe...







These Indians lined up for the camera in Waterloo, Black Hawk County, Iowa.







126 Prospect Street

Telephone 1810

## ADAM'S MOTOR COMPANY

*Indian*



Deliver Your Goods by Motorcycle



"RIDE AN INDIAN"



Buy an Indian 4--You Never Go Wrong

MOTORCYCLES, BICYCLES AND ACCESSORIES

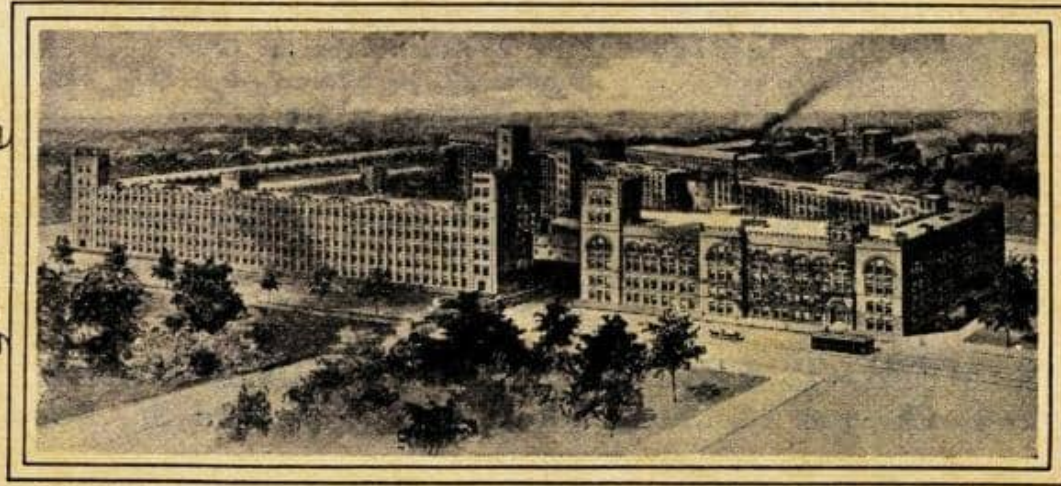
CADILLAC AUTO LIVERY

Torrington, Conn., \_\_\_\_\_ 192



# *Indian Motorcycle Co.*

Dept. A-1, Springfield, Mass.





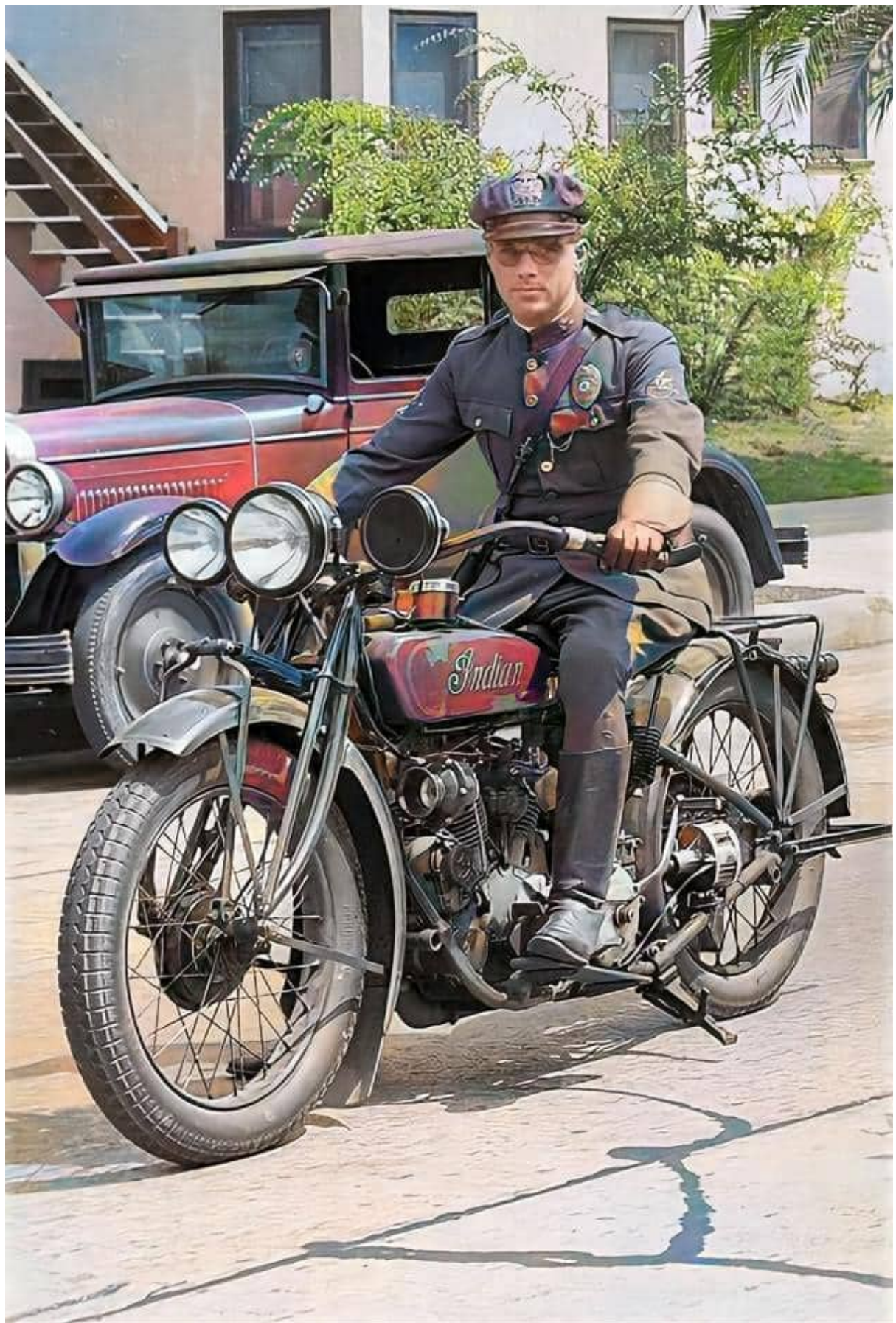


The model on the Indian is Eileen Percy, a Belfast-born actress who had a successful Hollywood career in silent movies. This portrait was part of an ad campaign for Foxes shoes.



This striking Dutch ad dates from 1920.









This Indian dates from 1911; the year the tribe dominated the TT.









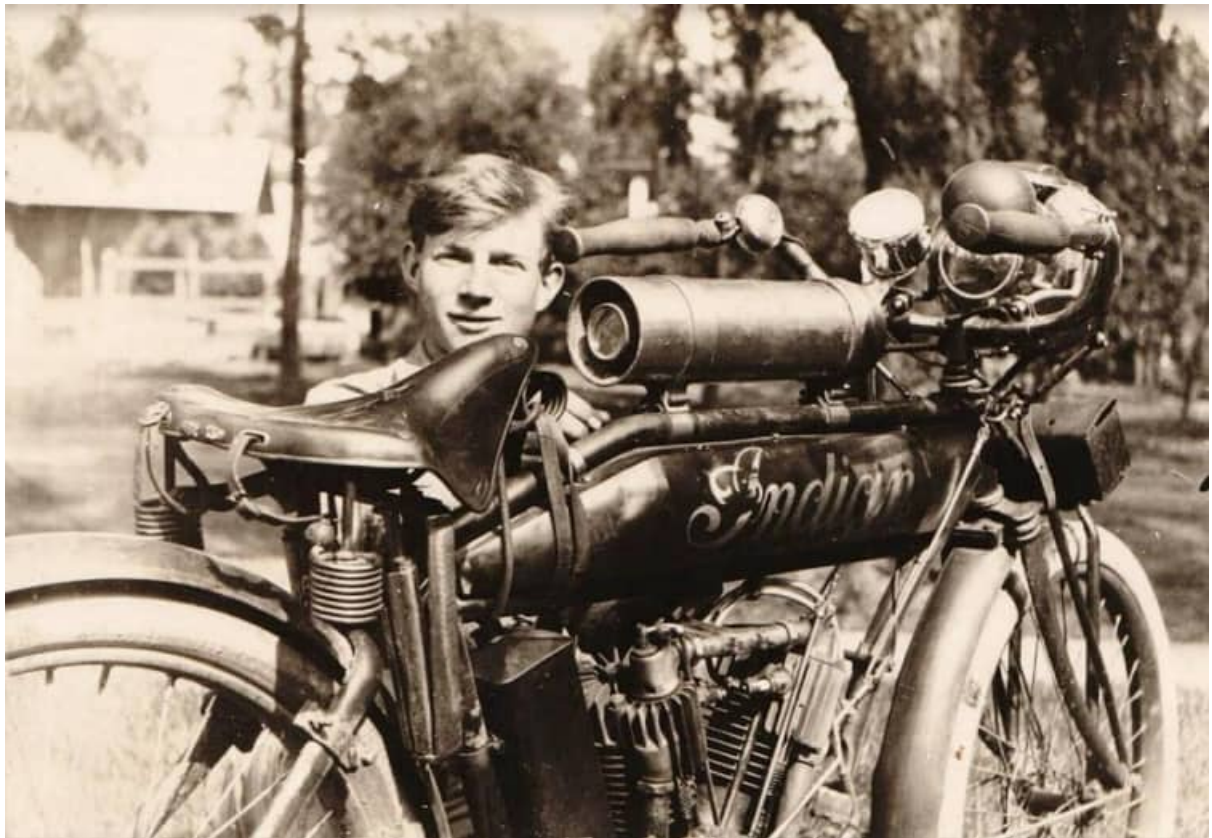




San José, California, 1914.



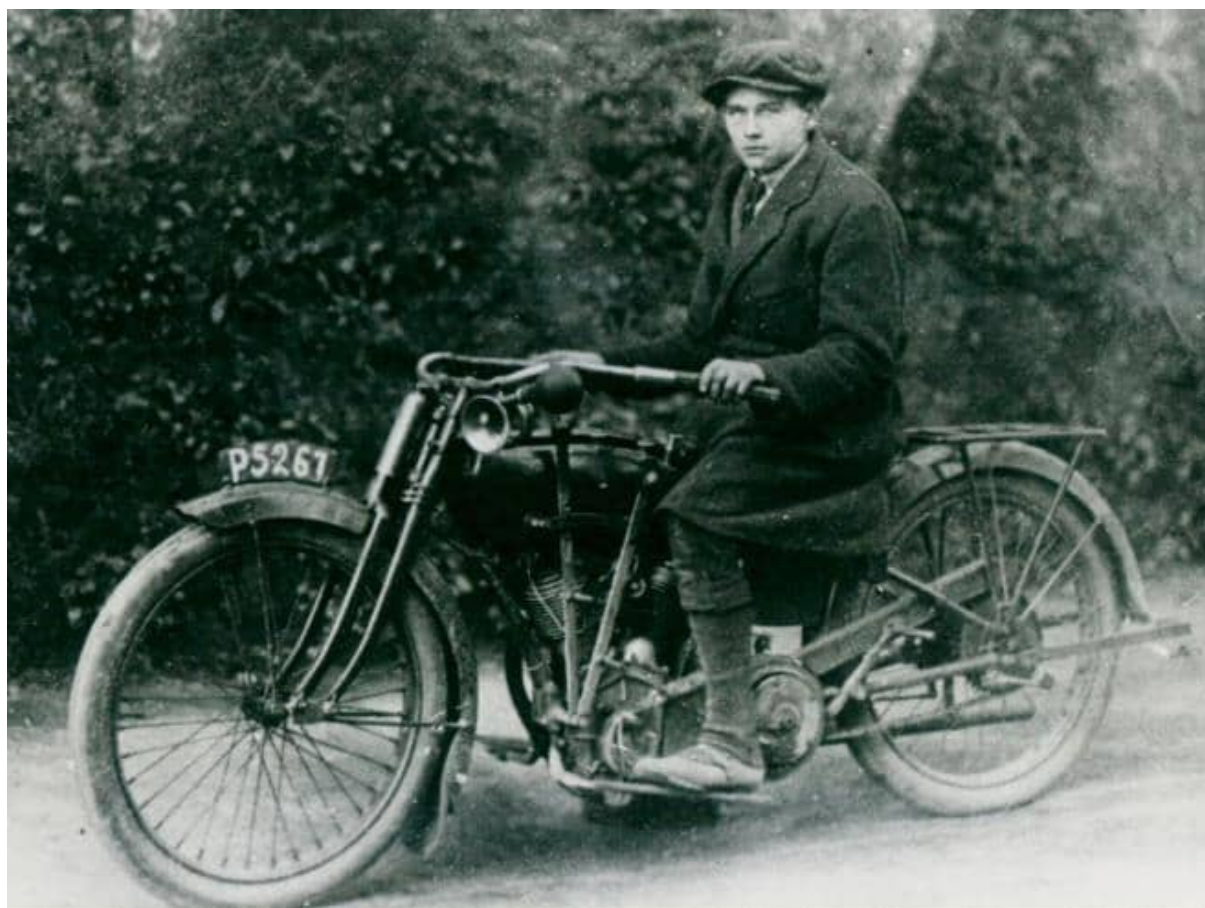




Indian's sidecar production line, circa 1918.



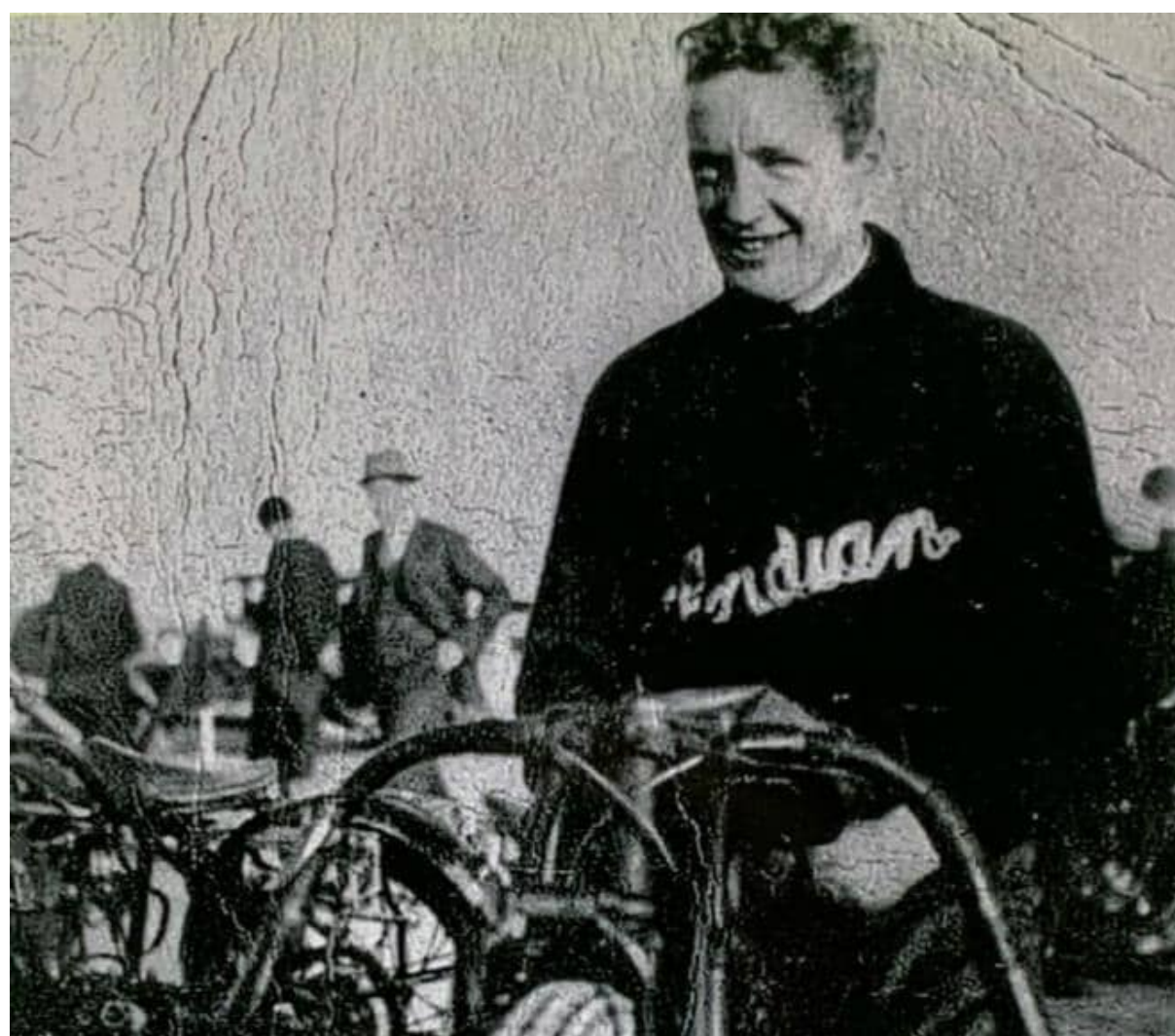






A nice day to take mama and papa out for a sedate jaunt on the Indian combo







...but this is one combo with a dual personality: it leans on corners. The rider's cap is back-to-front to handle some spirited roadburning and the passenger doesn't look impressed.





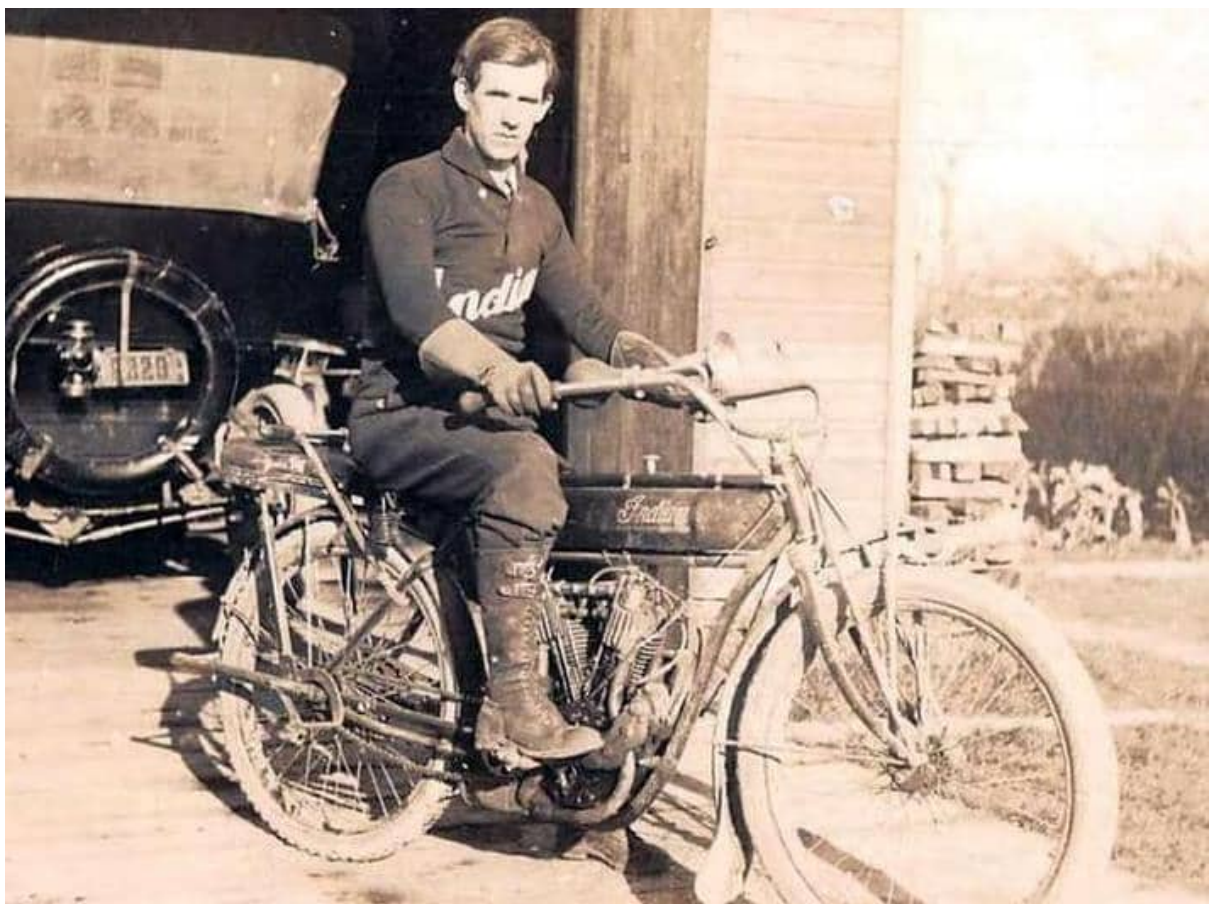
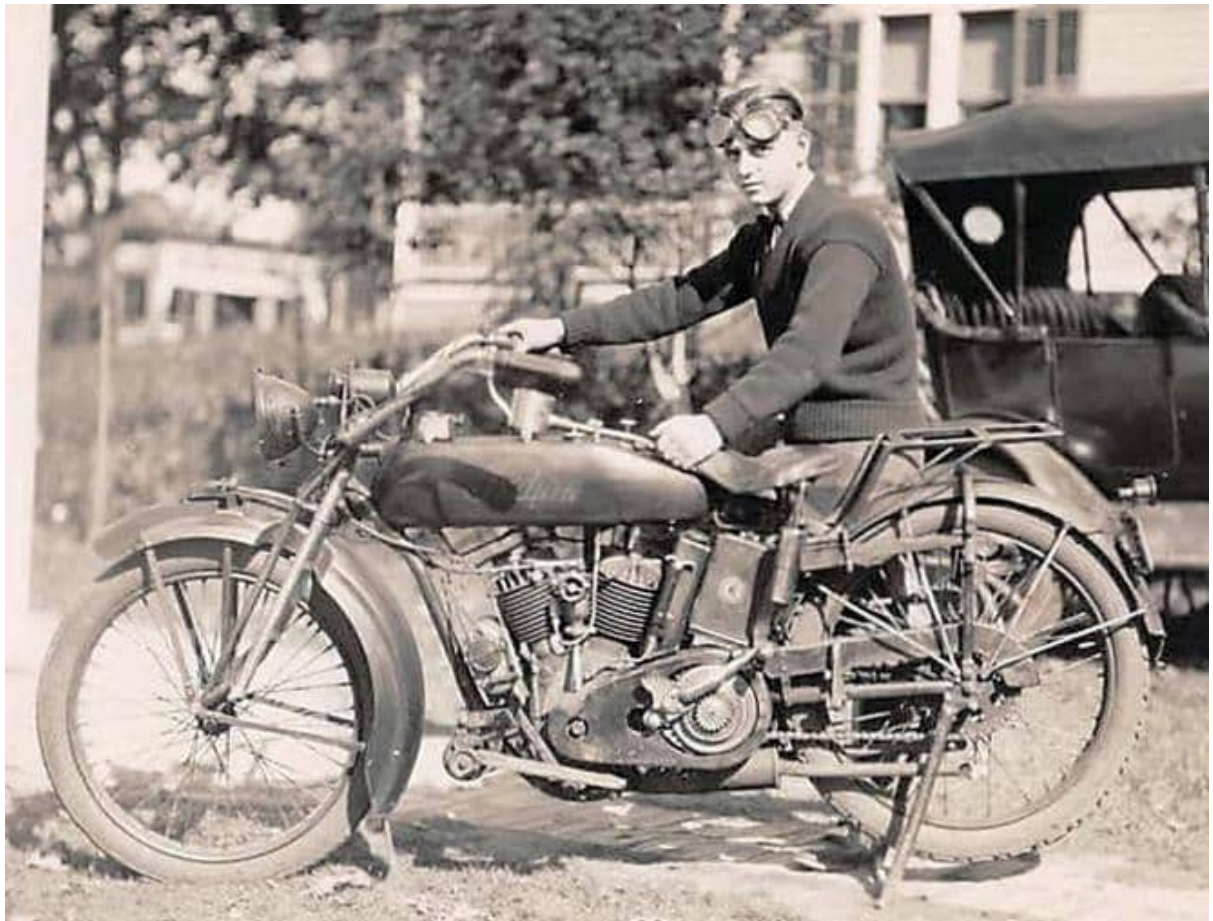
...or you could date twins and do away with the side hack altogether.



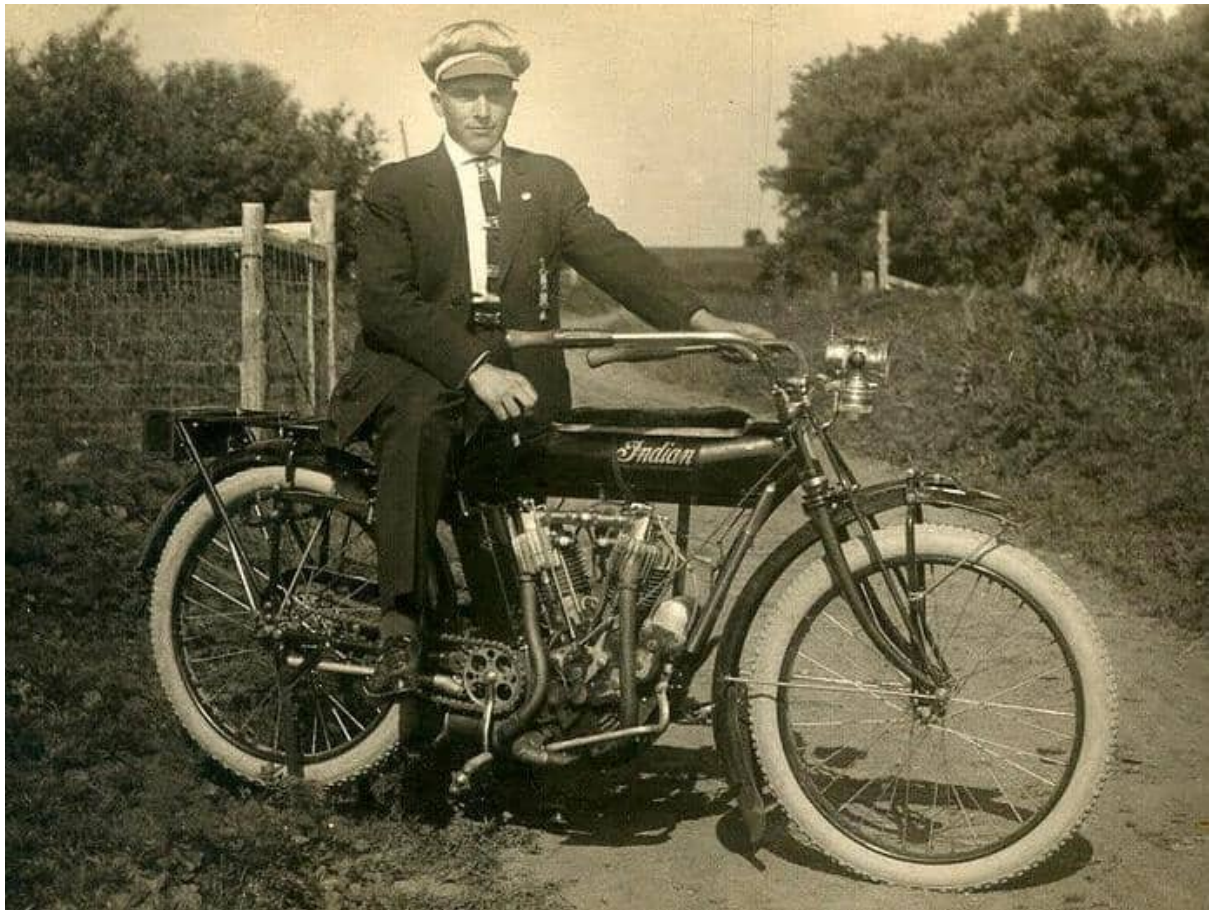




















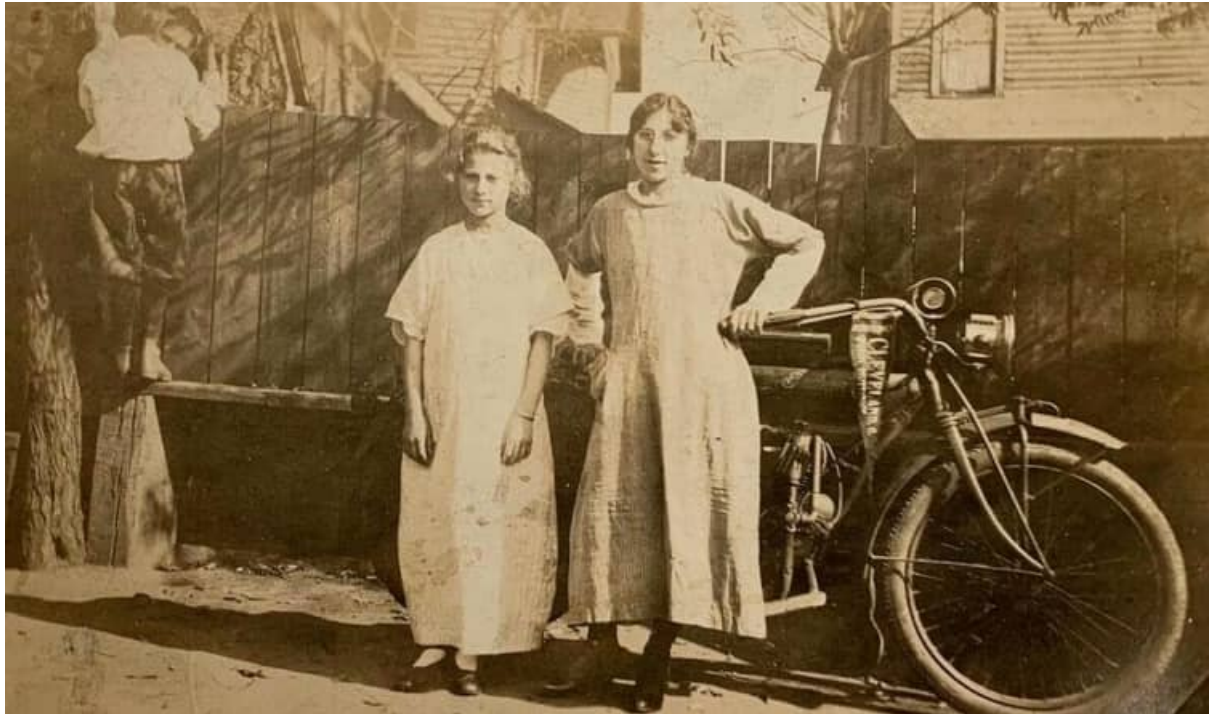
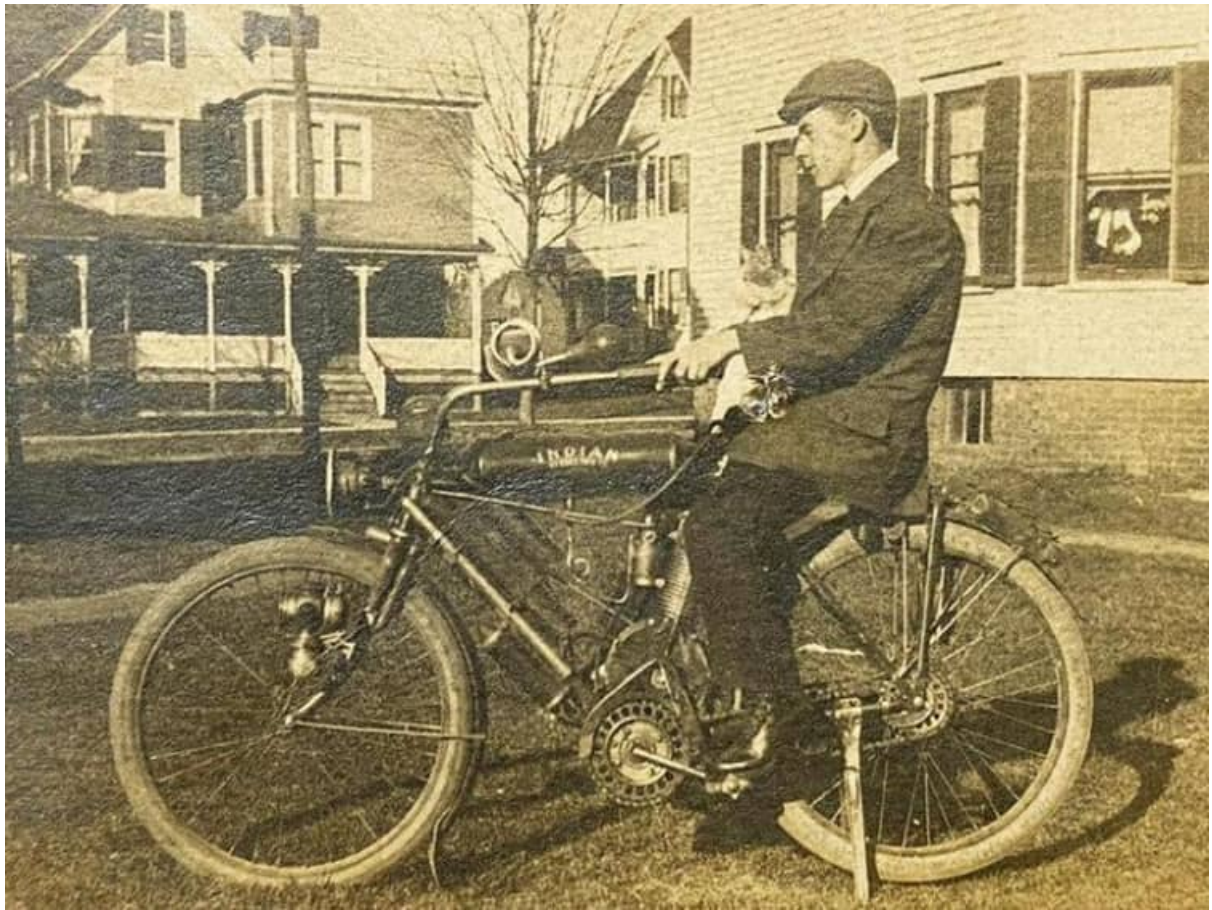




This Indian combo is piloted by Mlle Yconne Degraïne, who was a member of the French team in the 1920 Olympics.



















Good Advertising

There's an Authorized  
*Indian Dealer*  
in Your Neighborhood

It will pay *You*  
to get Acquainted  
with him~

Good Advertising  
Plus **GOOD** SERVICE

Because it is Distinctive-  
and Practical  
*The Indian*  
SERVICE CAR  
gives~

Effective Advertising  
Quick, Economical Deliveries  
Wider Selling Radius and  
Uninterrupted Service~

Good Advertising  
Plus **GOOD** SERVICE

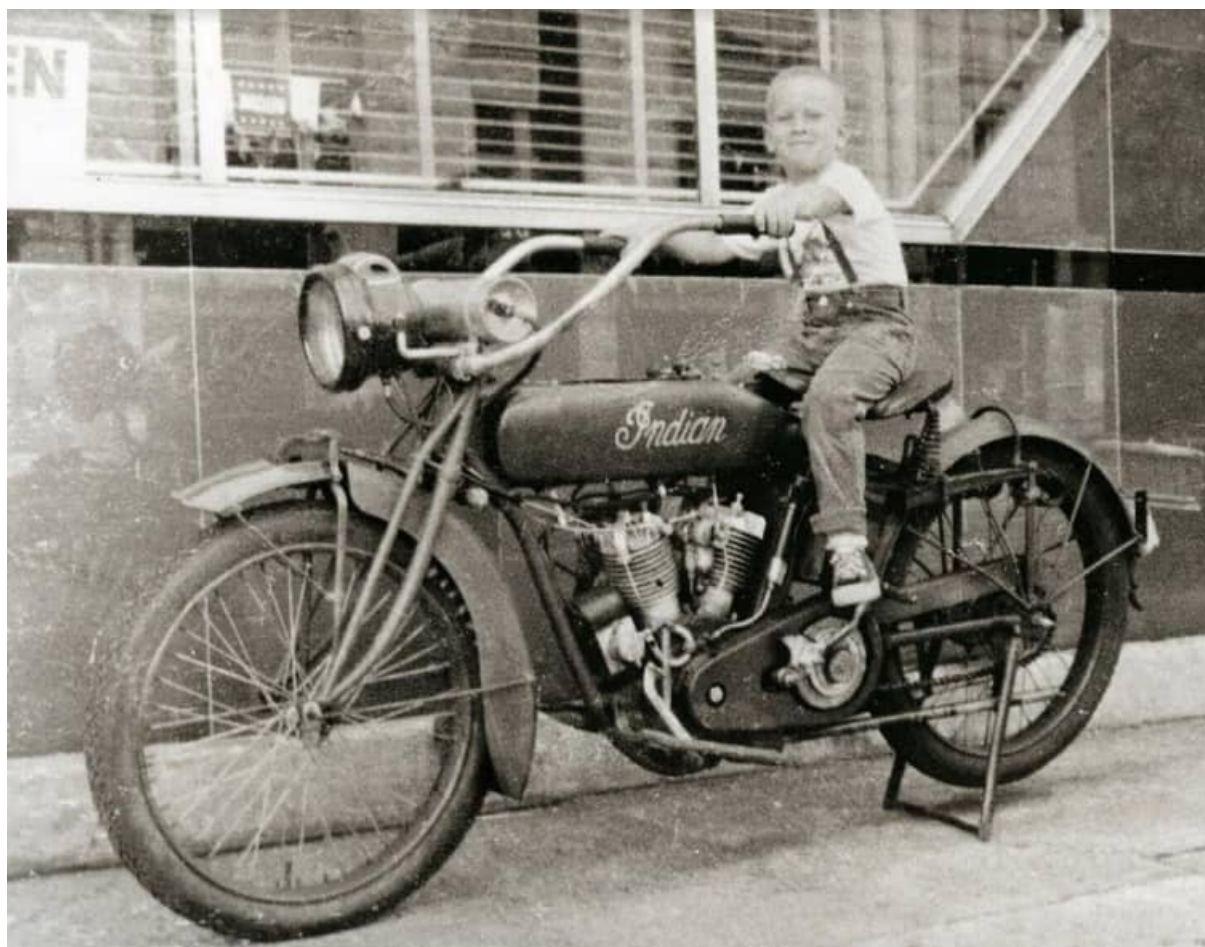
Want to see the  
*Indian in Action?*  
No trouble at all~

Just send the  
Card for **FREE**  
Demonstration!

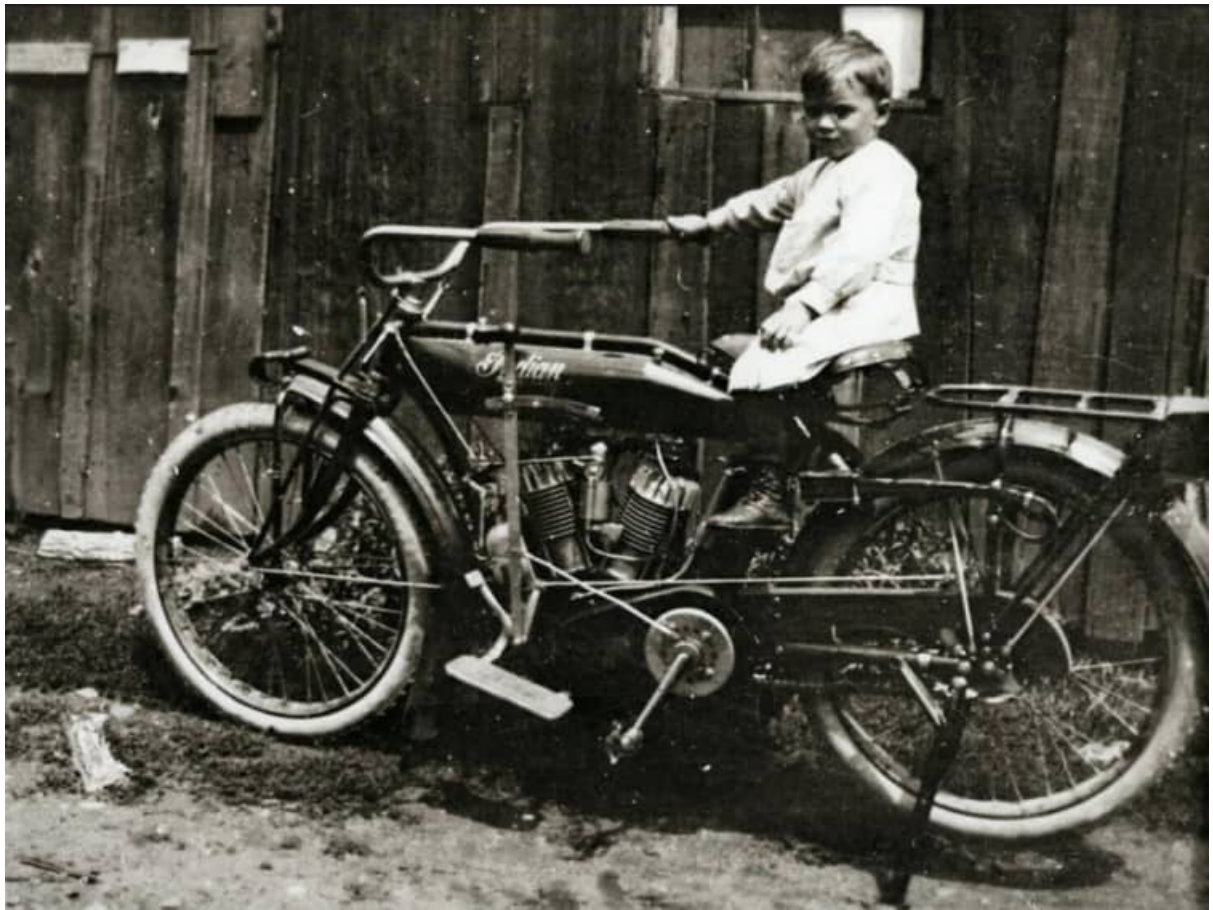
Good Advertising









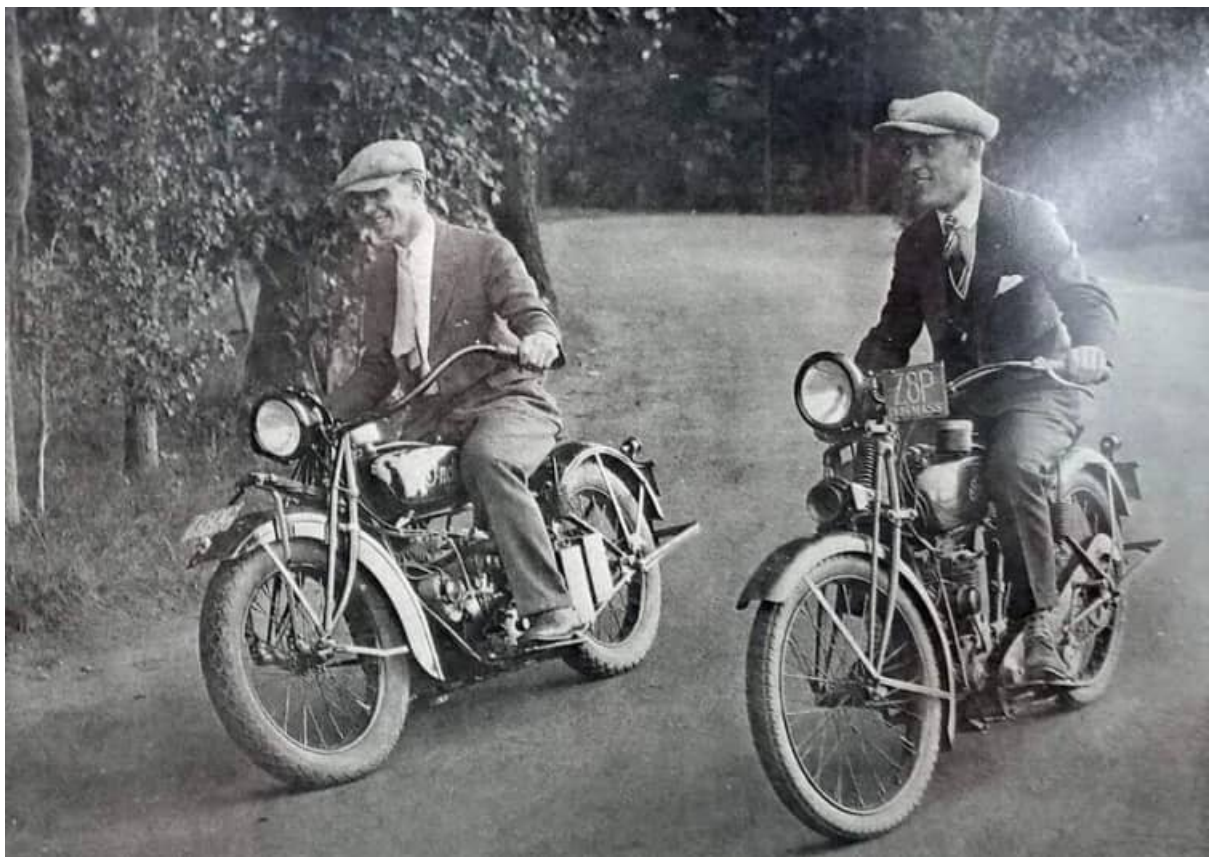






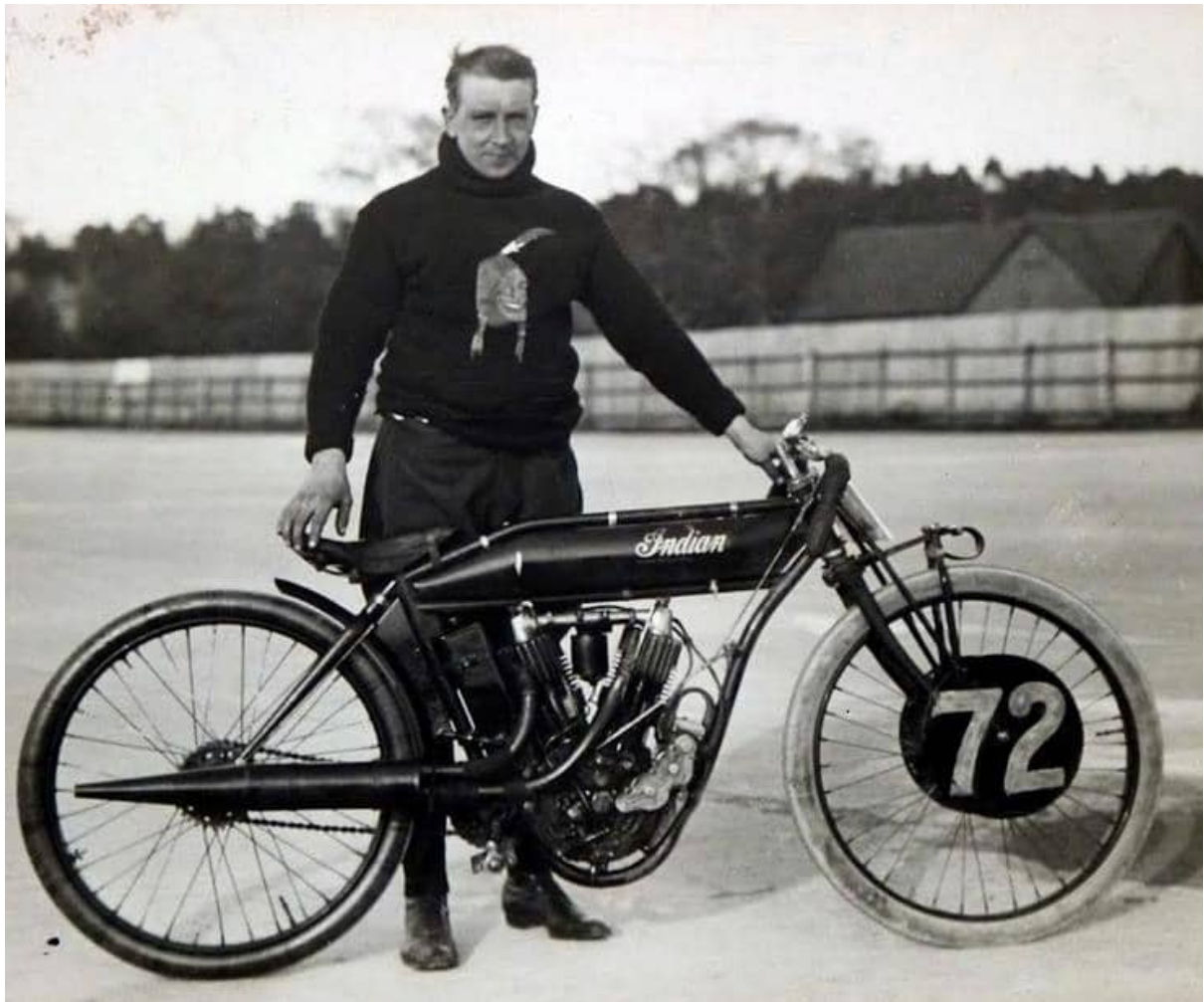










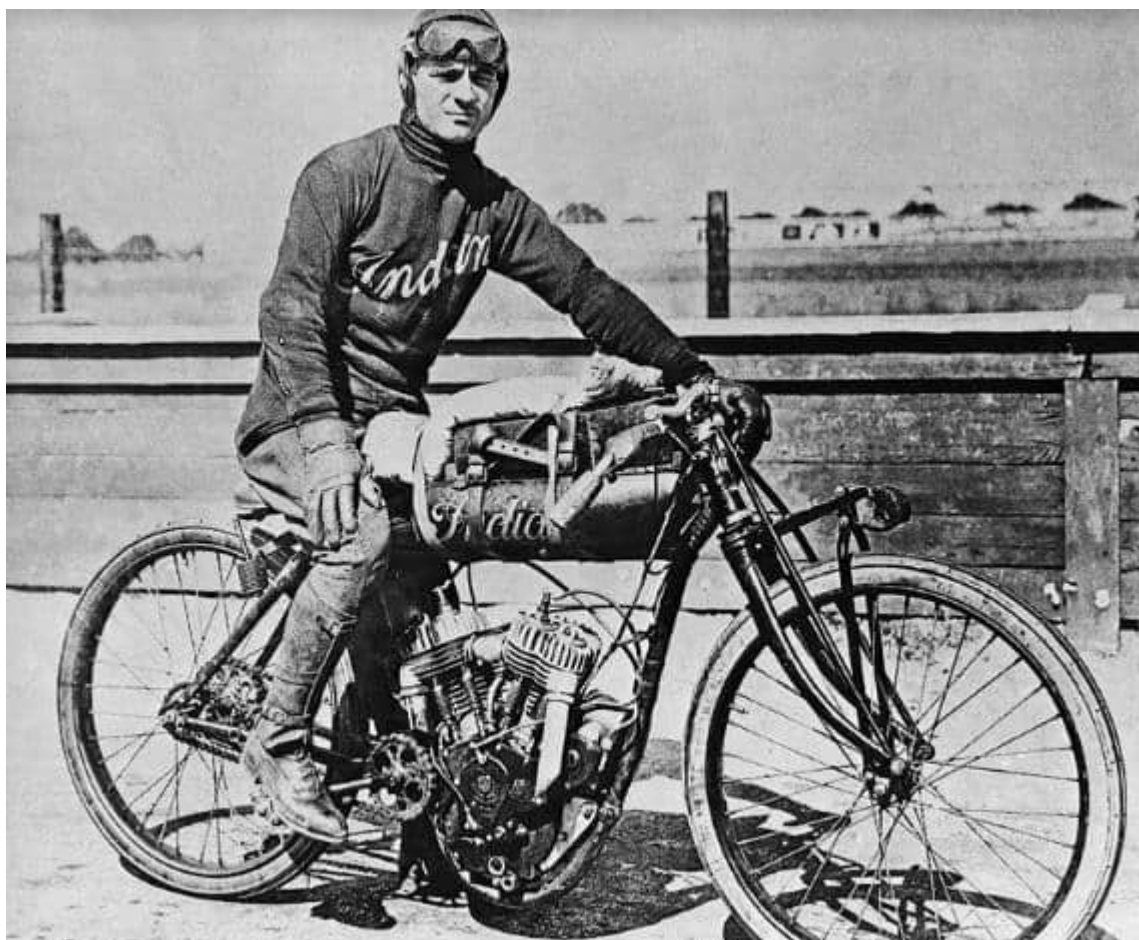


Not just an Indian, nor just any Indian rider. This is Arthur Moorhouse with the Indian he rode to 3rd place in the 1911 Senior TT.





Jim Davis has been dubbed “Master of the Motordrome”. He rode in his first motor cycle race aged 11 and became an Indian factory rider at 19, in 1915. From 1920 he rode for the Harley ‘Wrecking Crew’, returning to Indian in 1925. Davis was AMA National Champion in 1928 and 29. He retired in 1936 after starting in more than 1,500 races and started a new career with the Ohio State Highway Patrol. Jim Davis died in 2000, aged



103.

'Wild Bill' Church is pictured at the Los Angeles Ascott Park Speedway aboard the newly launched 1,000cc Indian Powerplus. Church later won acclaim for riding a Powerplus up and over a roller coaster at the Venice Beach amusement park with his chum 'Gasoline' Gus Martin on the pillion.



These chaps were out on a spree in 1907.





Also from 1911, this is the Indian team on their happy hunting ground, Daytona Beach.



This is Harry Glenn, pictured in 1912 against the almost sheer surface of the Atlanta Motordrome.





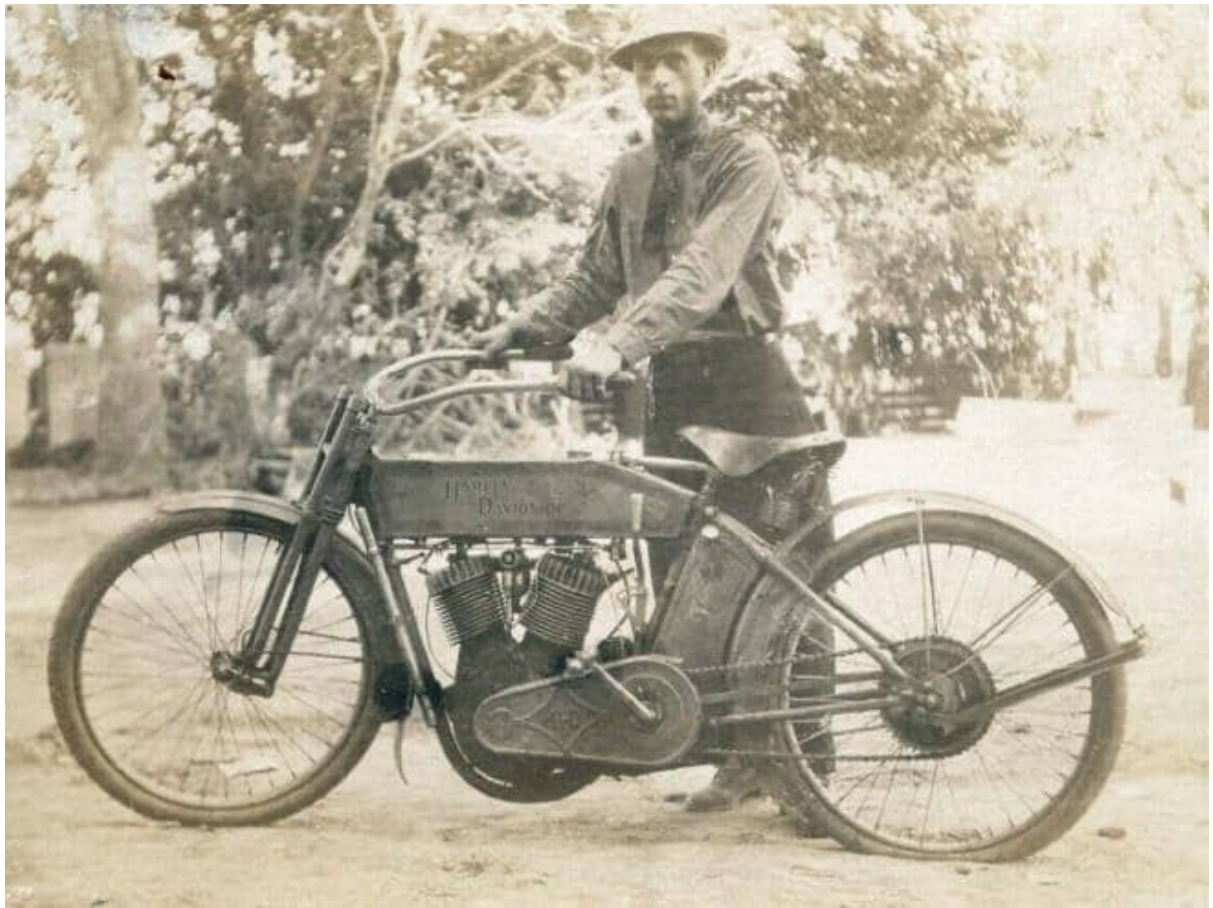


Racing the boards on an autodrome—these board tracks were chillingly known as ‘murderdromes’ in response to their safety record.

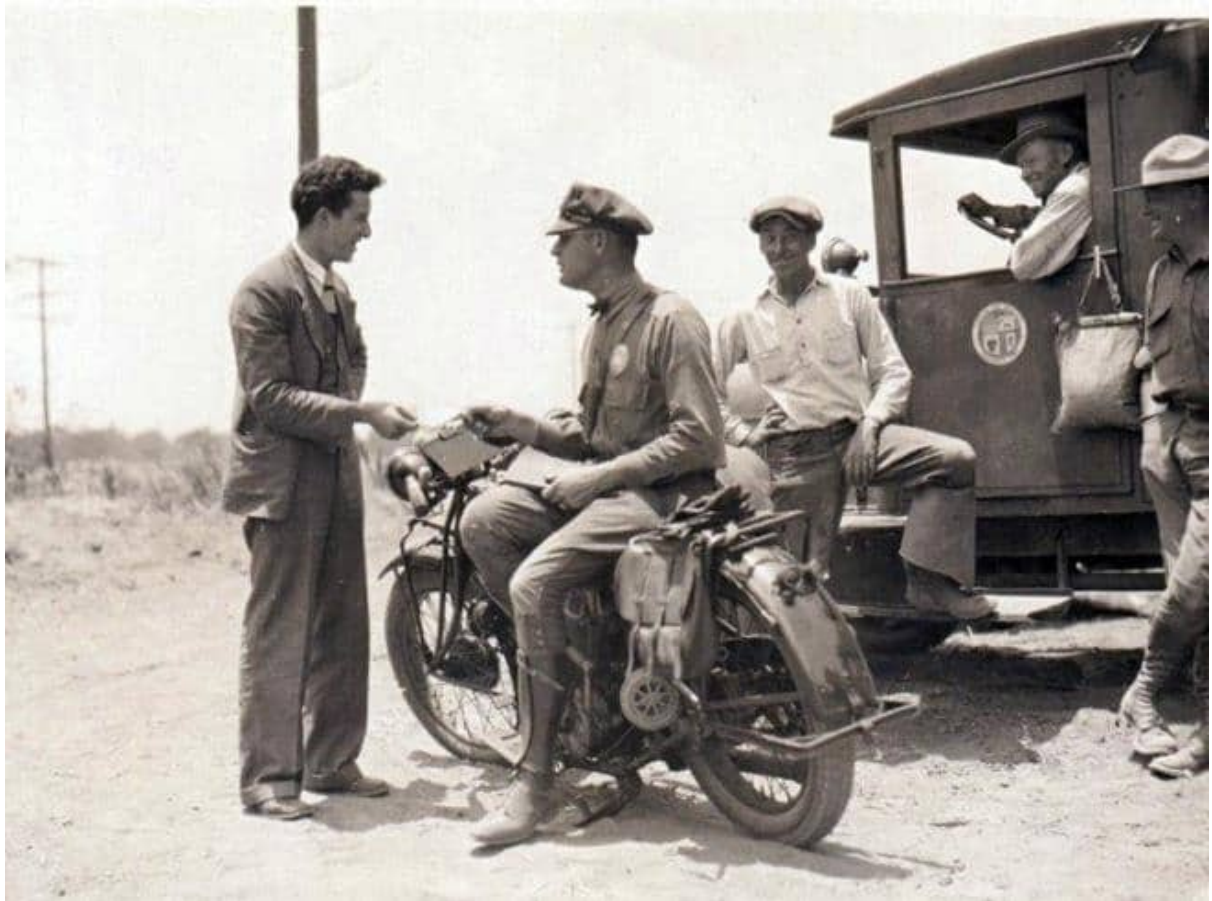


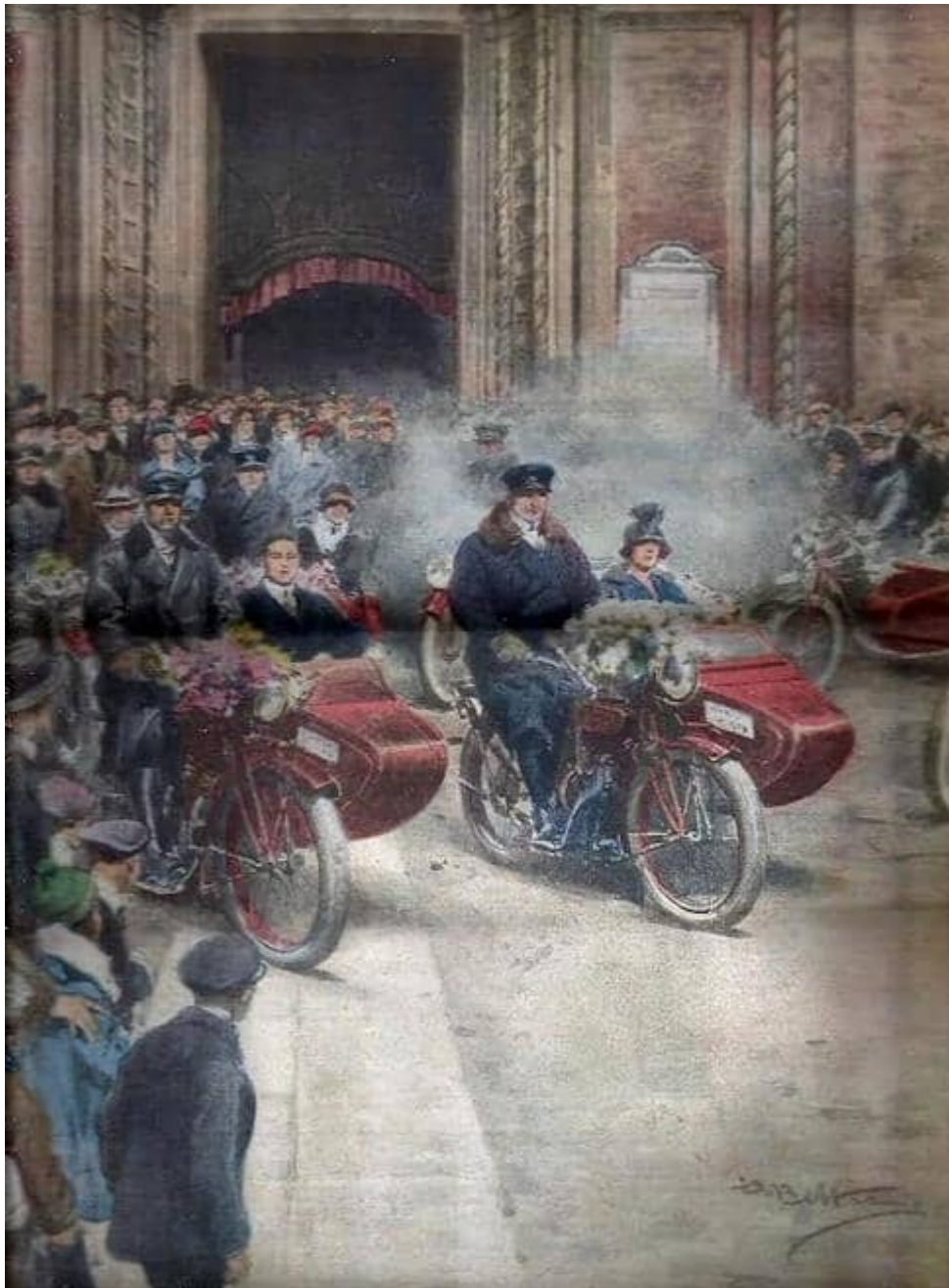






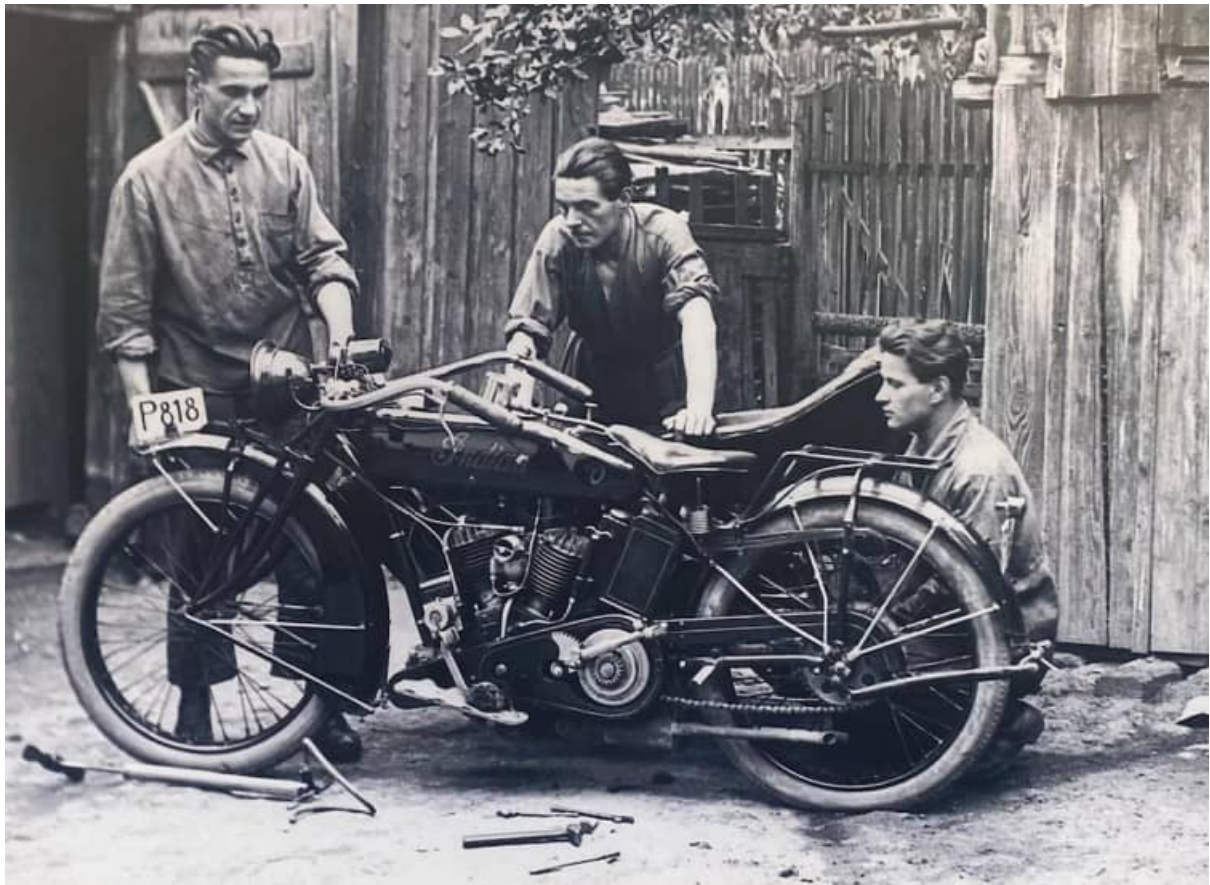




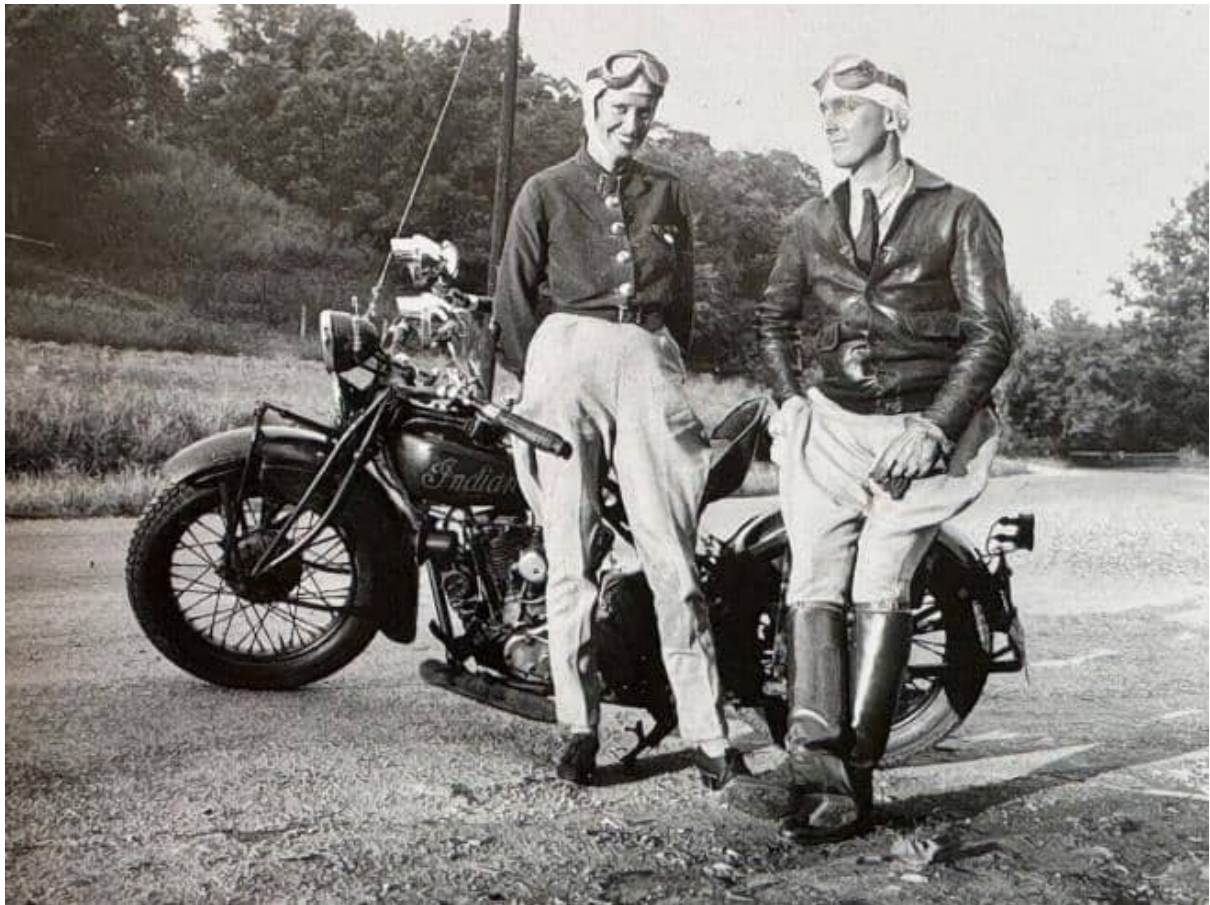


When Indian riders married, the tribe went to church.



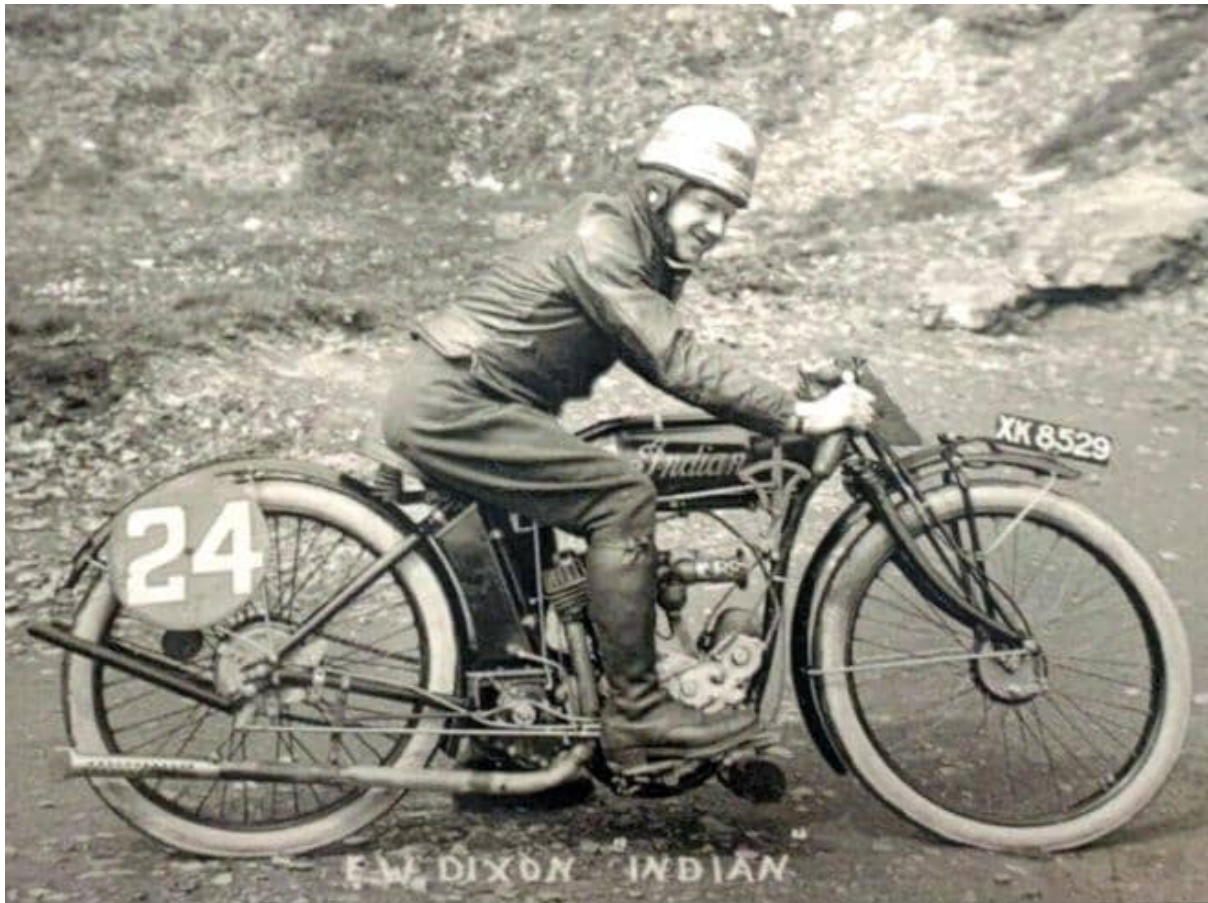


The size of that hammer next to the Indian's front wheel brings to mind the old saying, "If at first you don't succeed, try a bigger hammer."



This happy couple with their Scout were pictured in 1937.



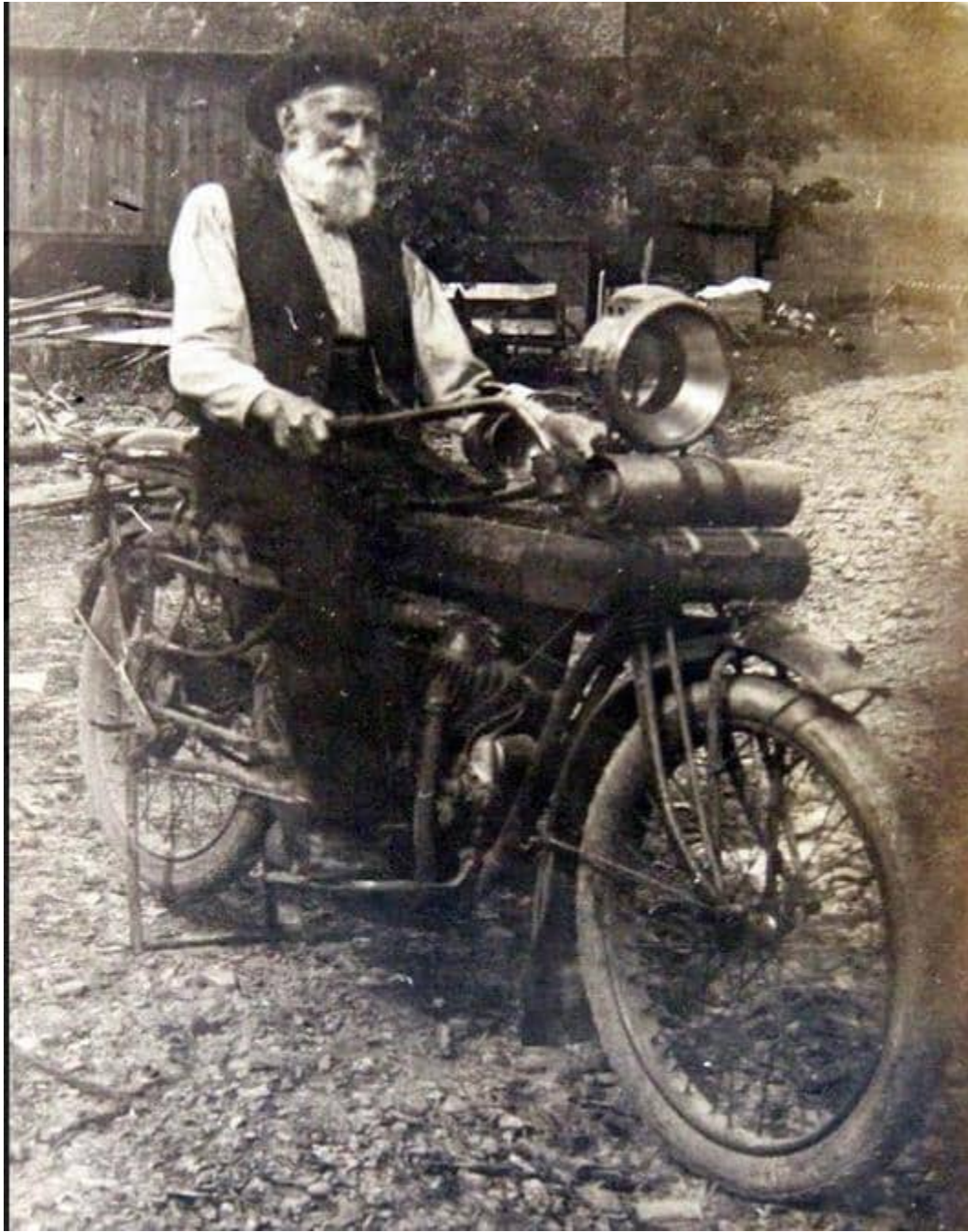


Freddie Dixon was a works rider for Indian but also rode successfully for Cleveland, Precision, Douglas, Harley-Davidson, Brough Superior and HRD.

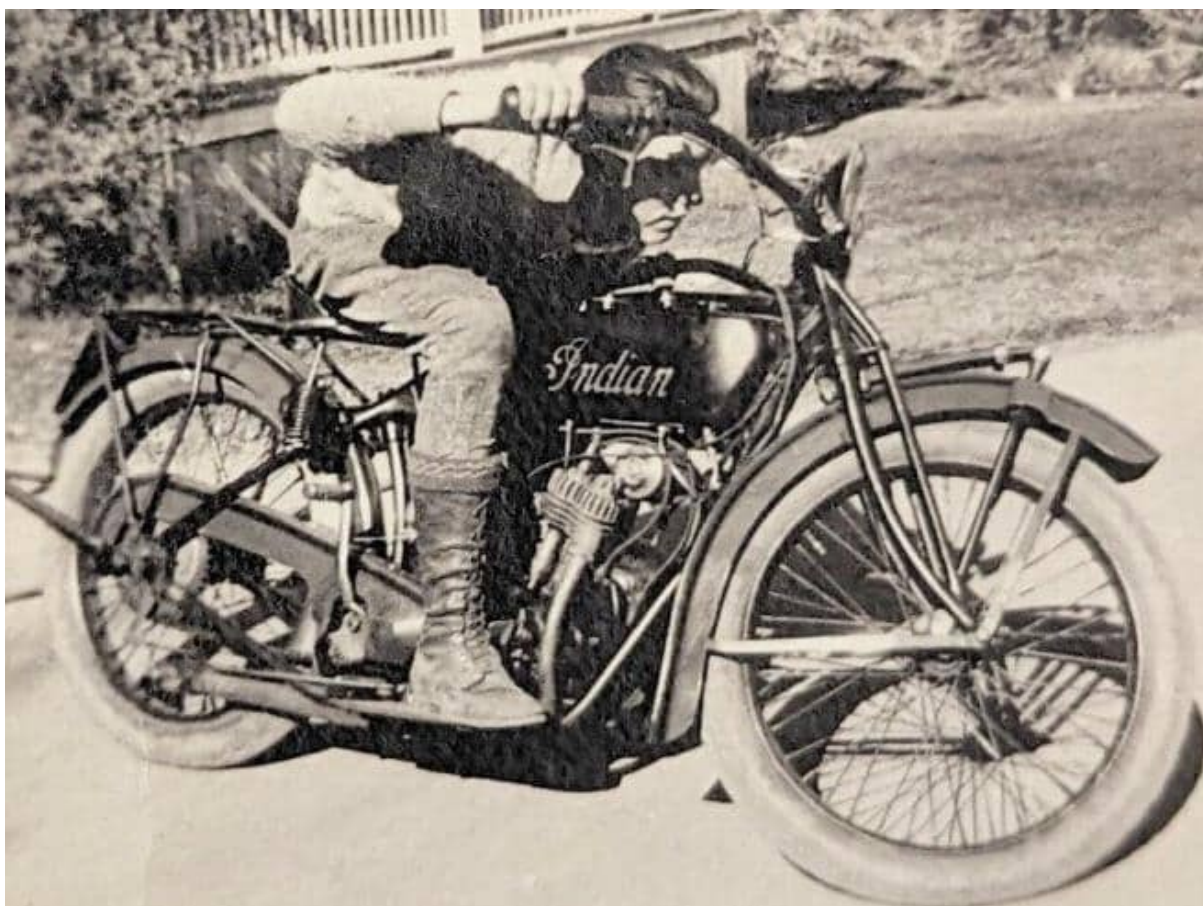






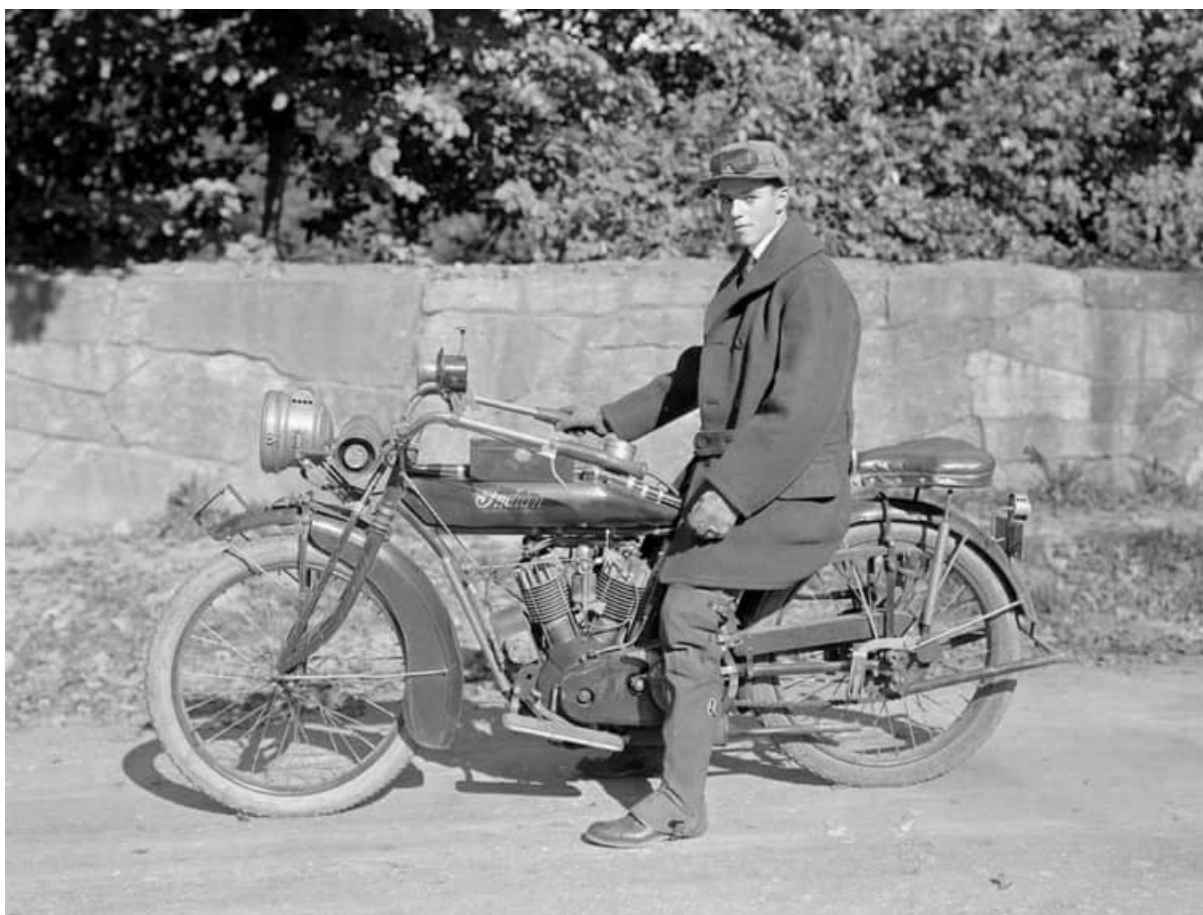


This veteran was pictured in 1914. It's a sobering thought that he might have fought in the war between the States, when Springfield was know for firearms rather than Indians.



This member of the tribe is a tad younger; you can almost hear him whispering “brmmm-brmmm” as he twists that throttle. Cool boots though.





This smartly dressed youngster was pictured in 1915, just a couple of years before the US doughboys headed for the Western Front.



No, not a Great War outfit—this Indian machine-gun carriage is in the hands of police officers. The Brits had to make do with their truncheons.



This 1,000cc Indian, ridden by a chap named Vanella, is pictured at the 1913 French Grand Prix.





1922, this is Billy Denham.



This pitstop, clearly in Europe rather than the States, depicts an Indian rider named Amadeo Ruggeri.







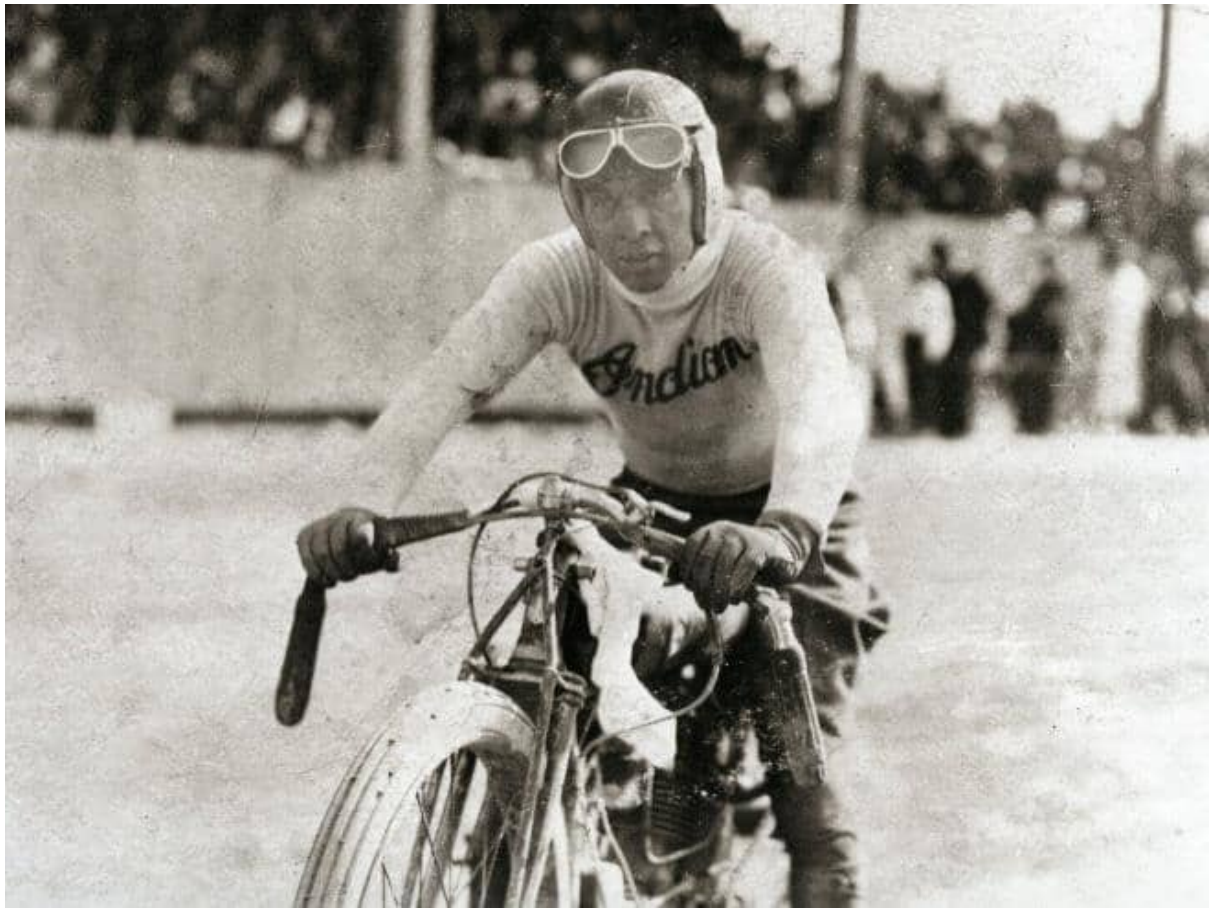
This Indian is doing its stuff at Ormonde Beach...



...and here's the Indian tribe at Ormonde.







1920, Indian tribesman Johnnie Seymour at the Motordrome Boardtrack.



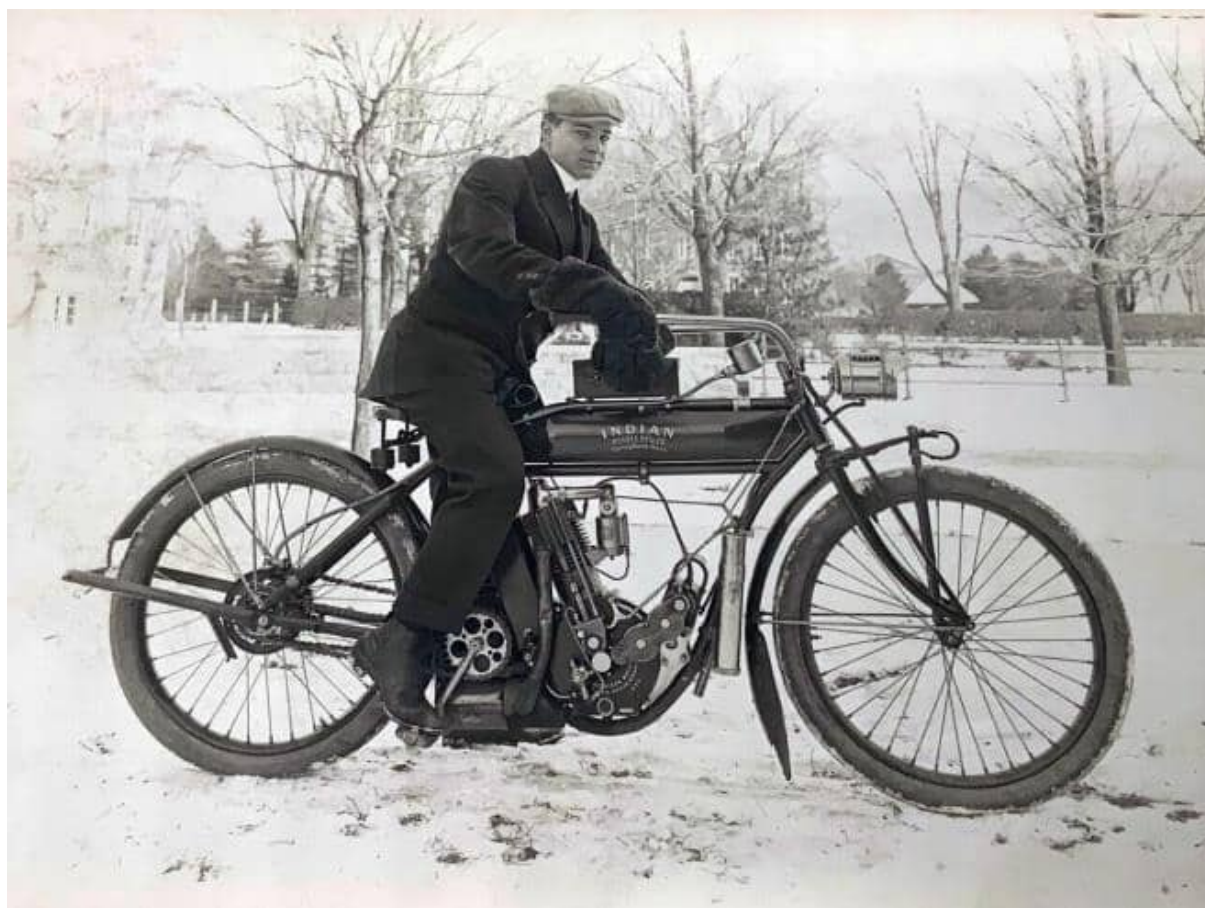


In 1920 Albert 'Shrimp' Burns took the almost unheard of step of moving from the Harley 'Wrecking Crew' to the Indian tribe. At a race in Toledo the following year he crashed and sustained fatal head injuries.













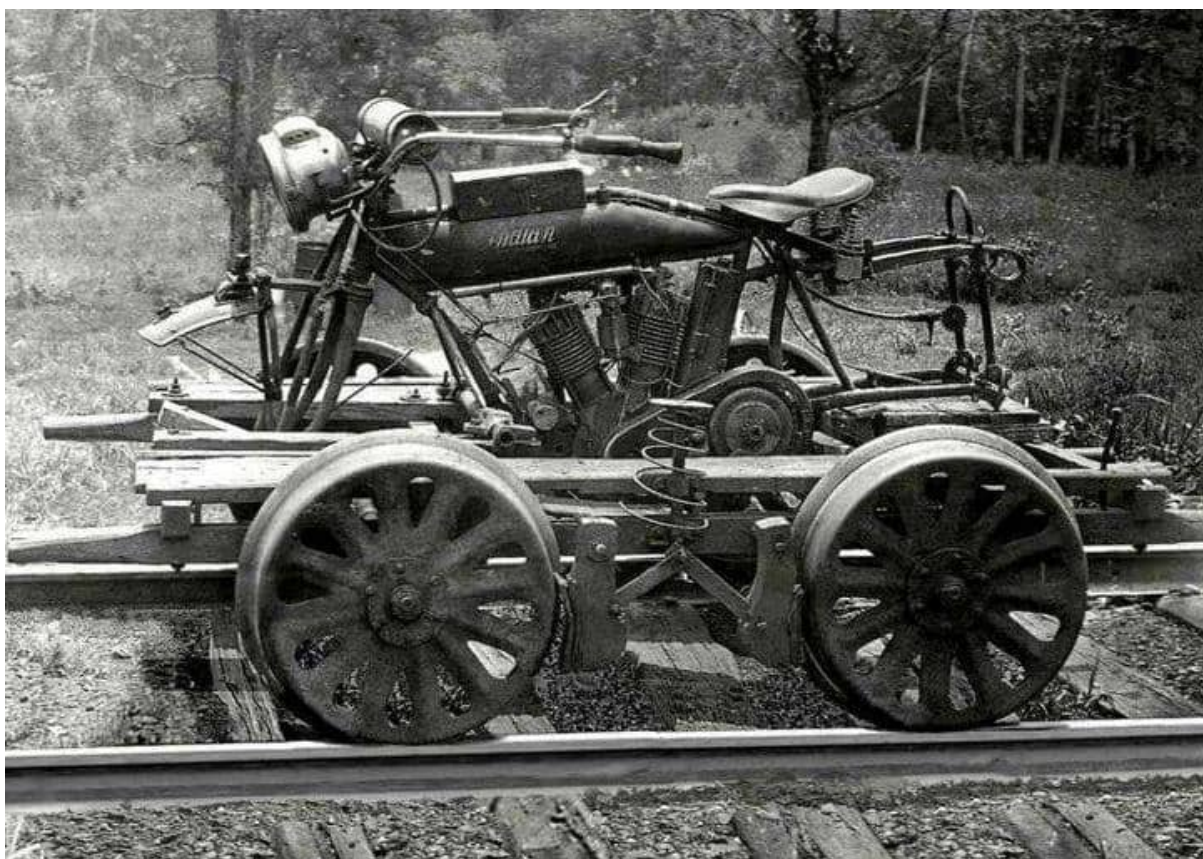
This Indian was pictured in 1910.



This photo, and the two that follow, were taken in 1926. Say hello to cousins Henry Beck and Eric Cribb.

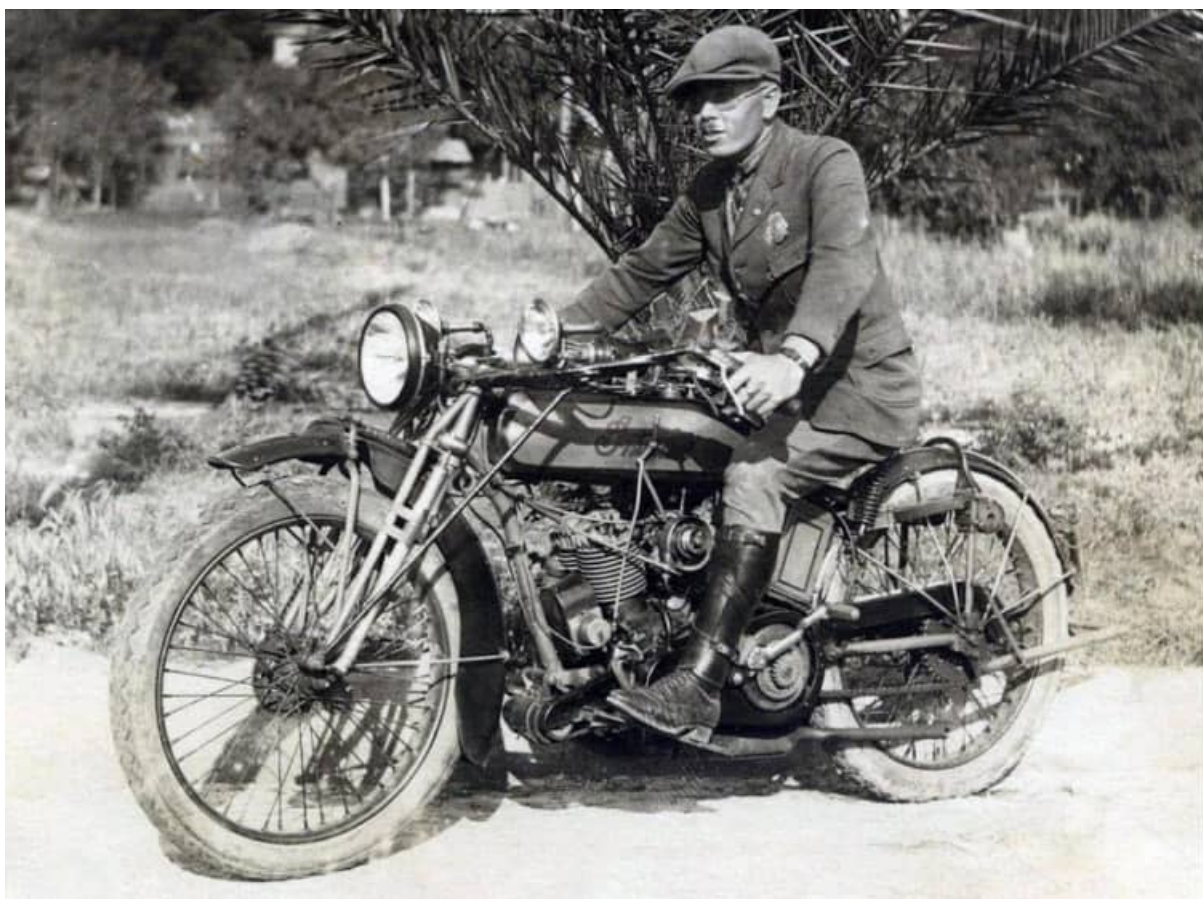






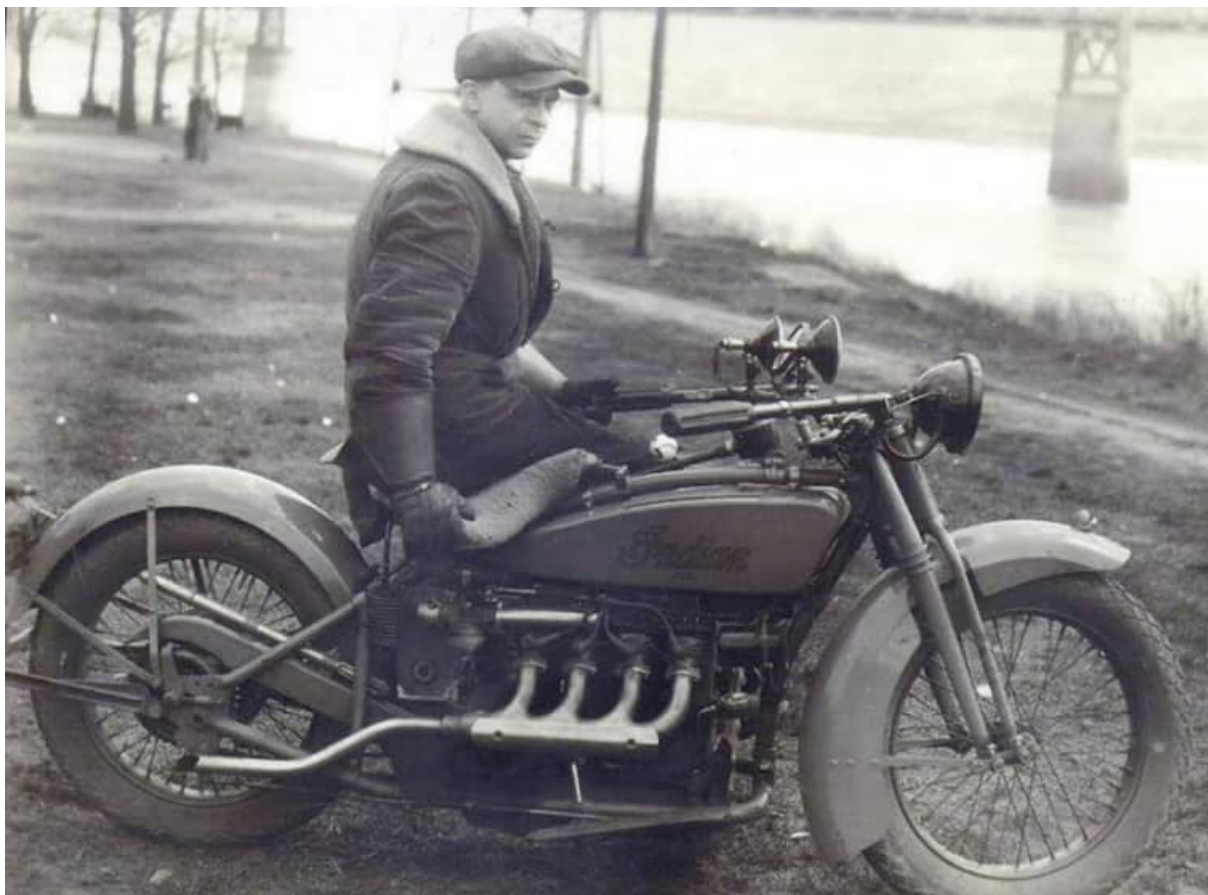
This clever railway transport was built in 1915.





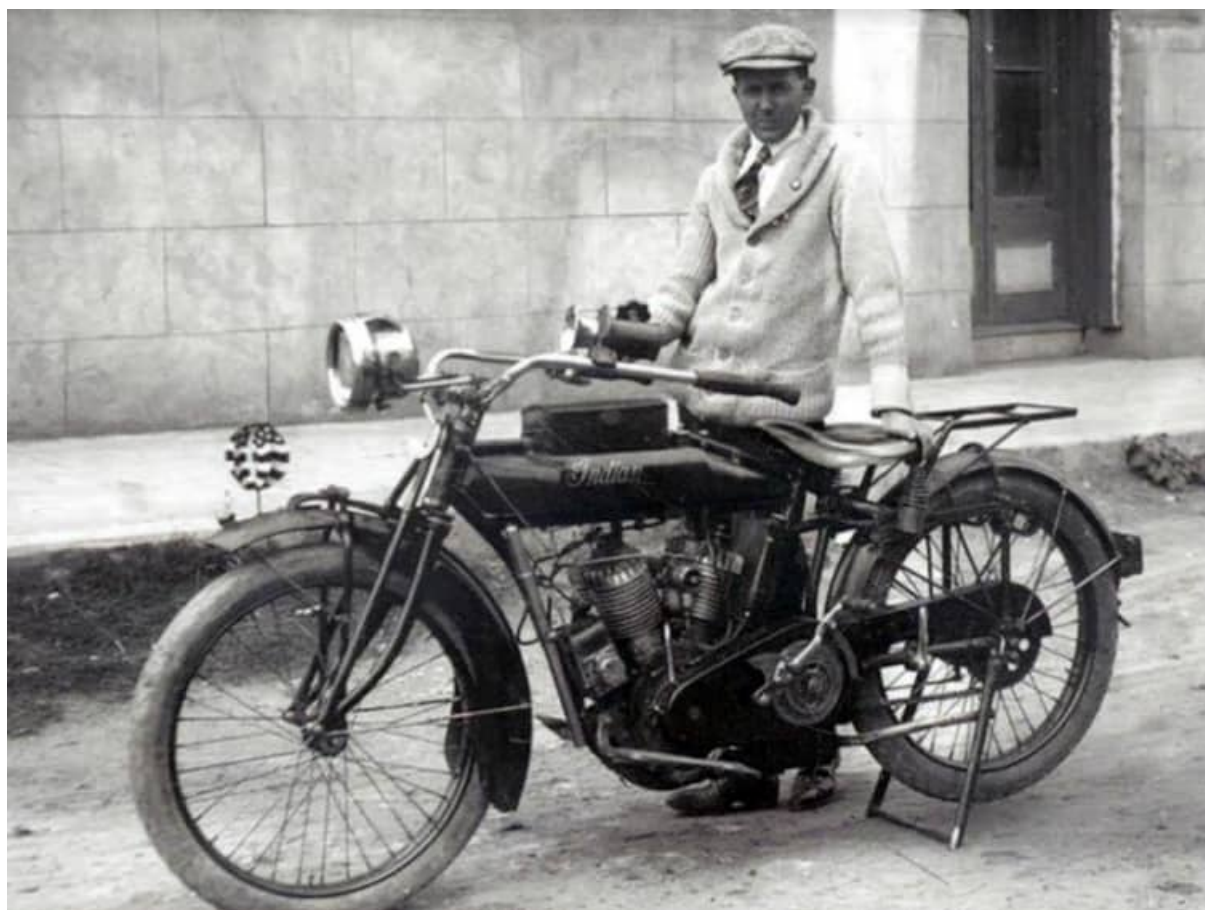
Two pots good...



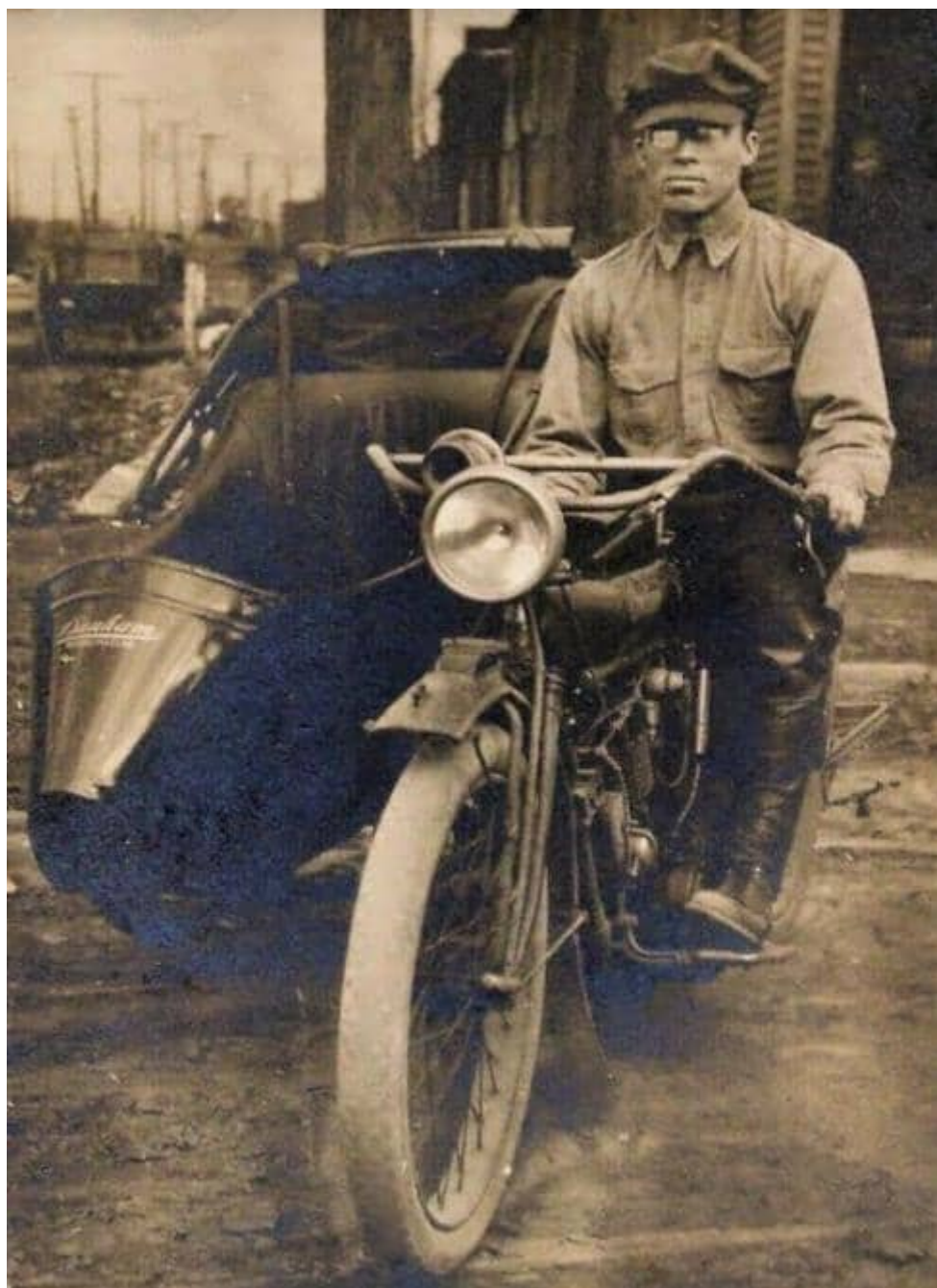


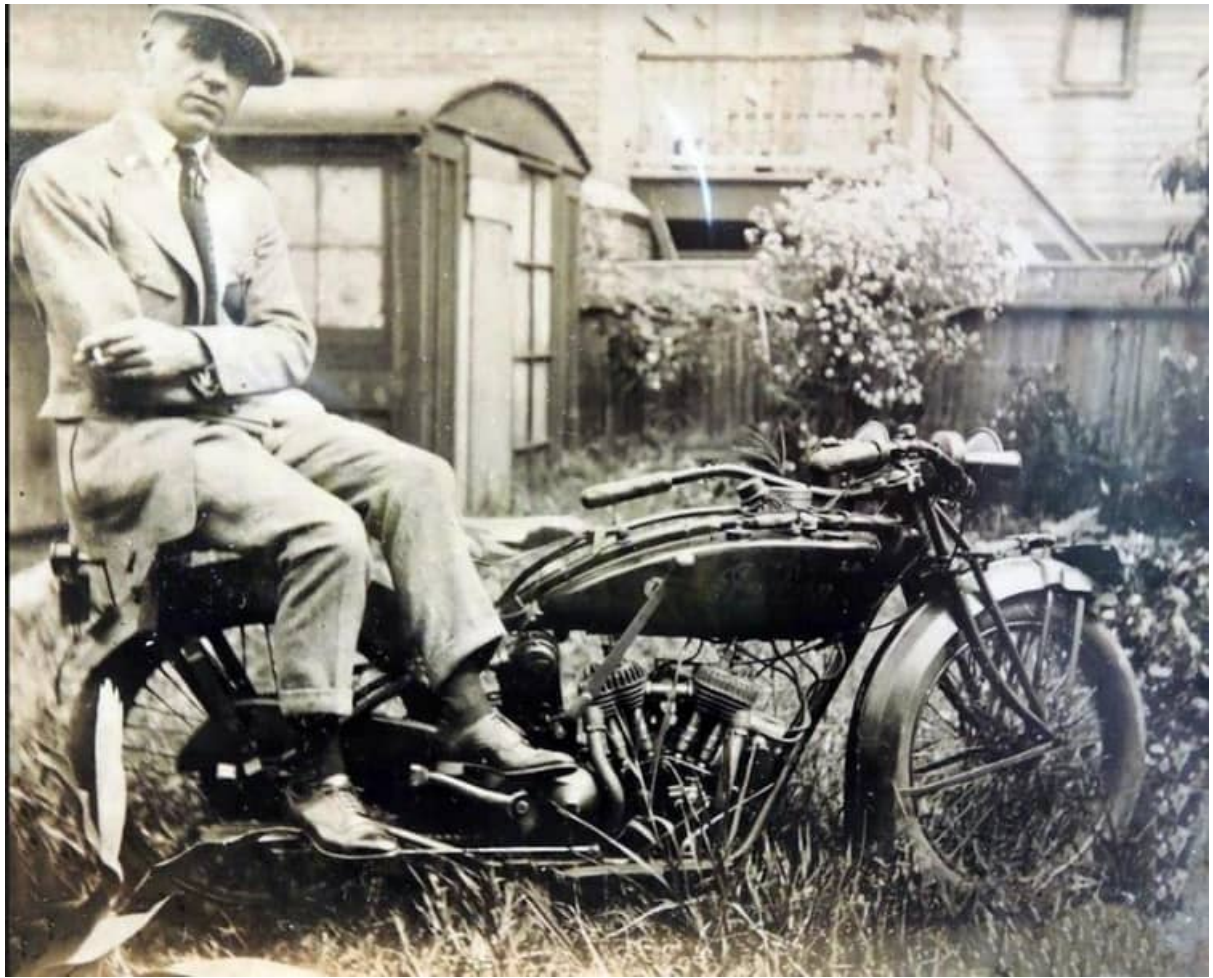
Four pots better?





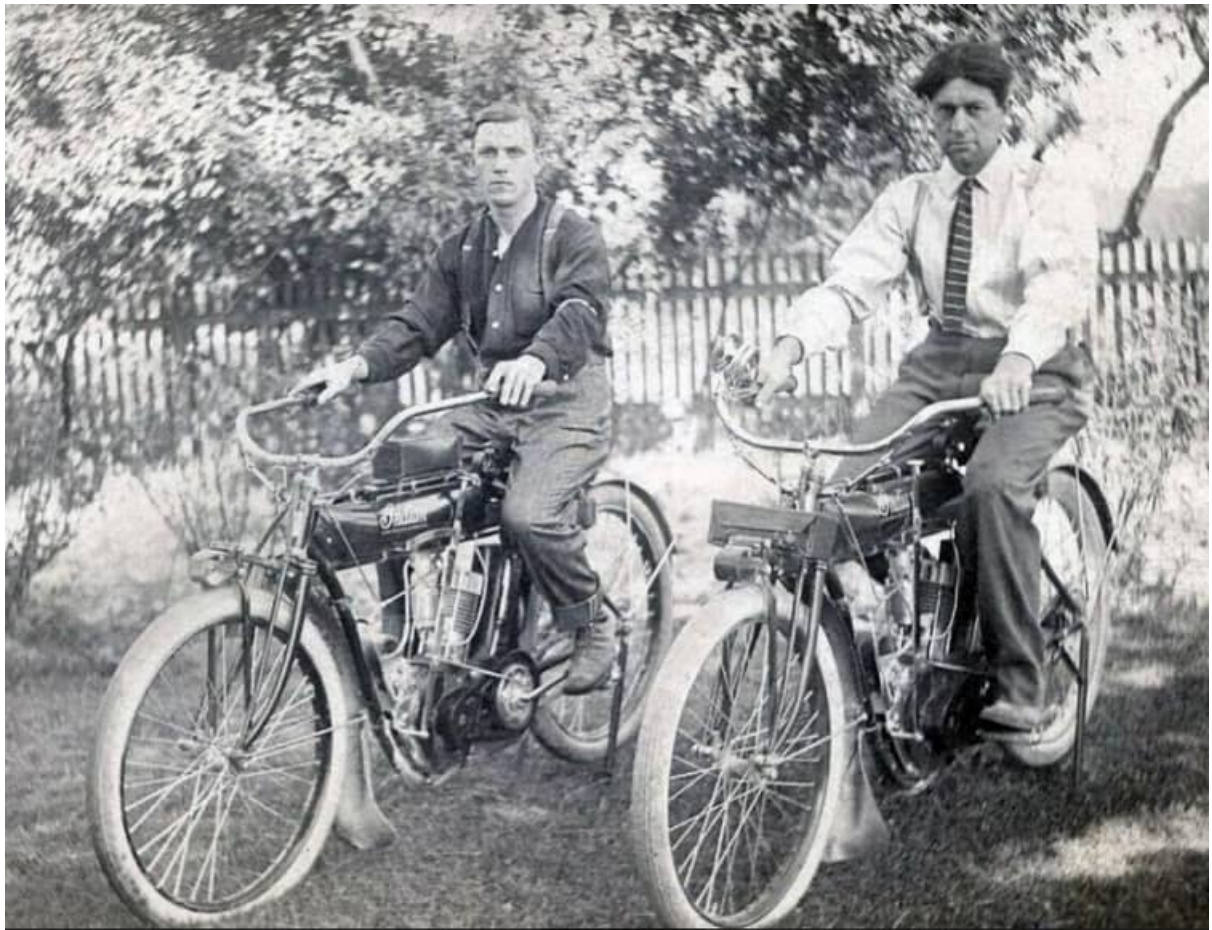






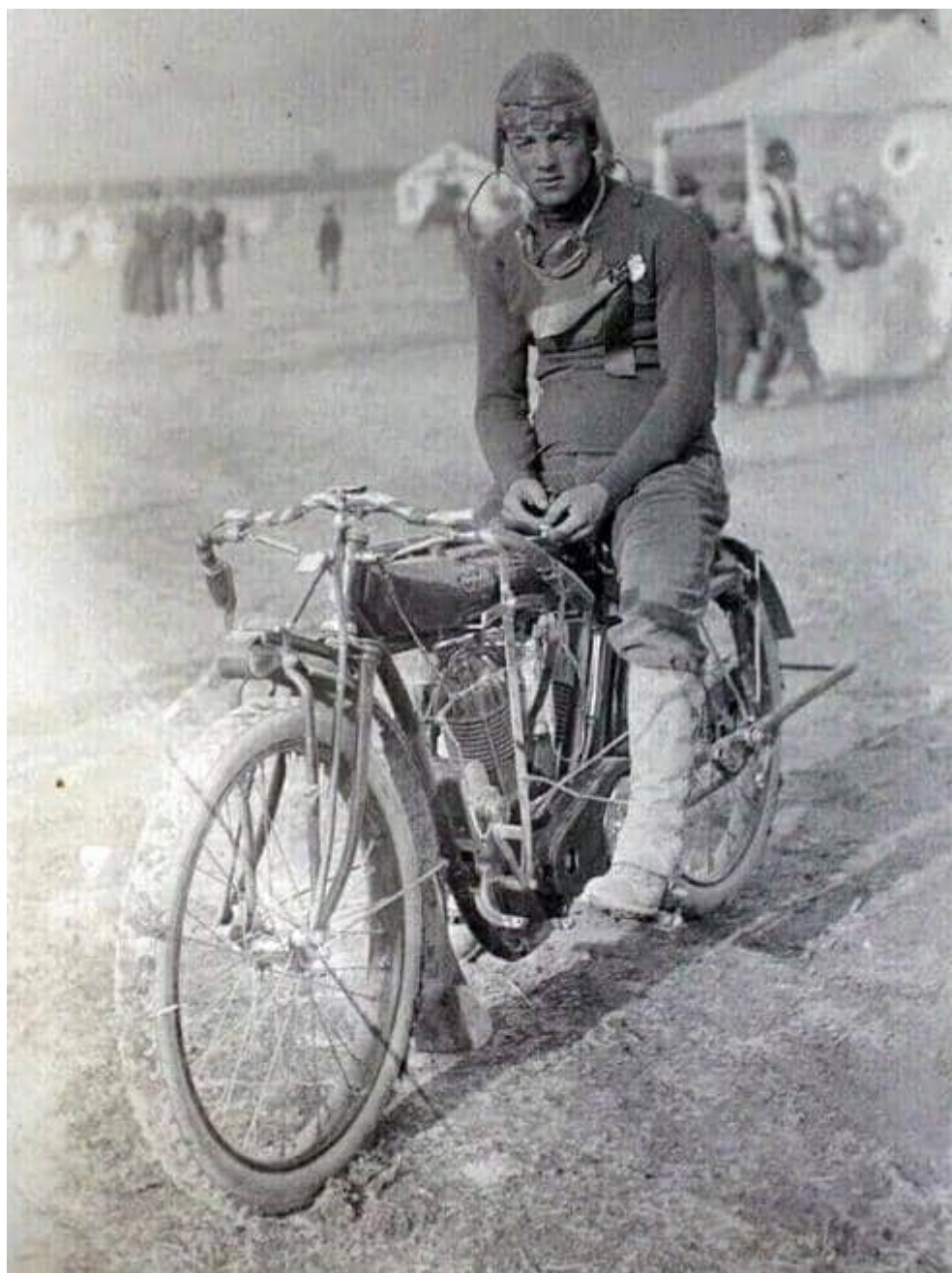




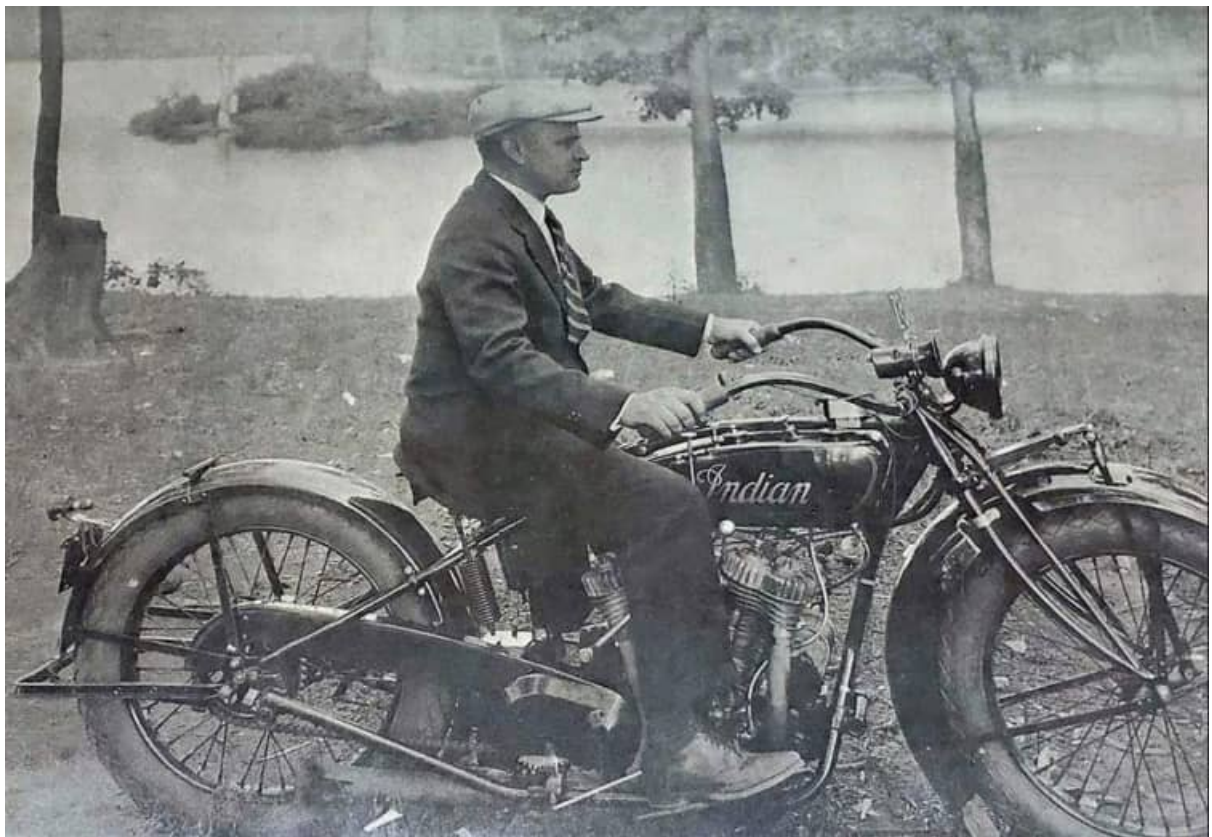






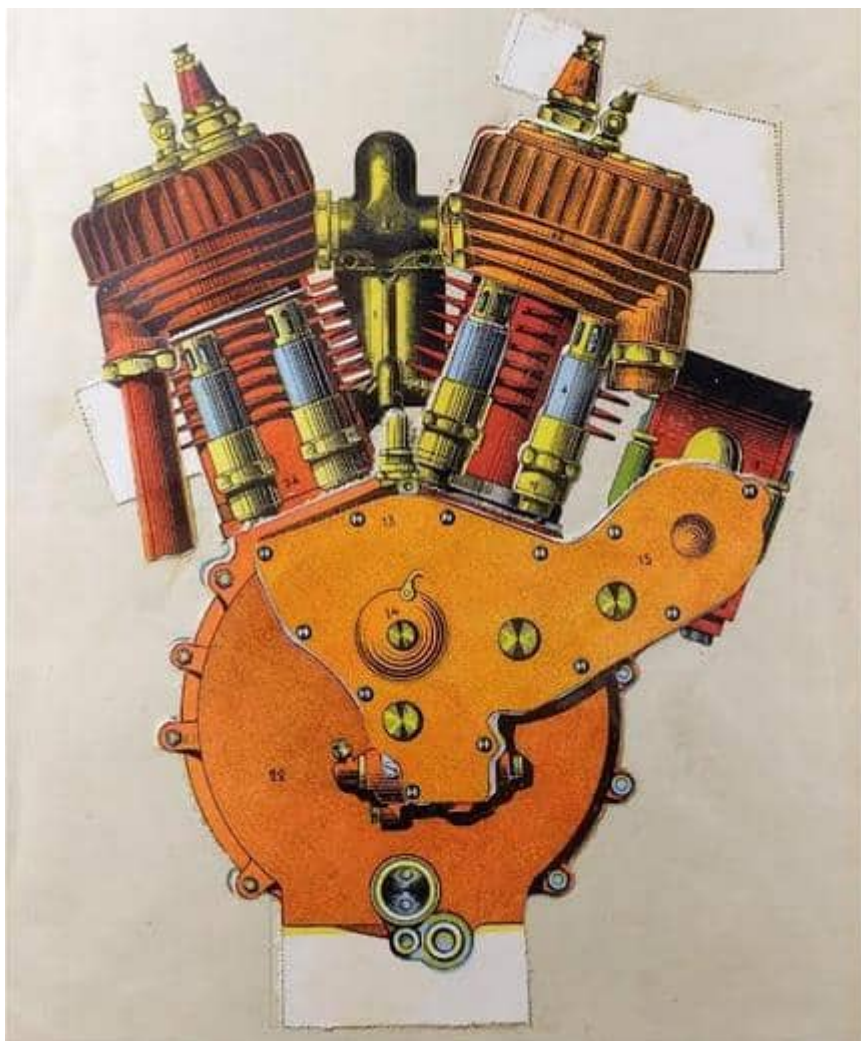






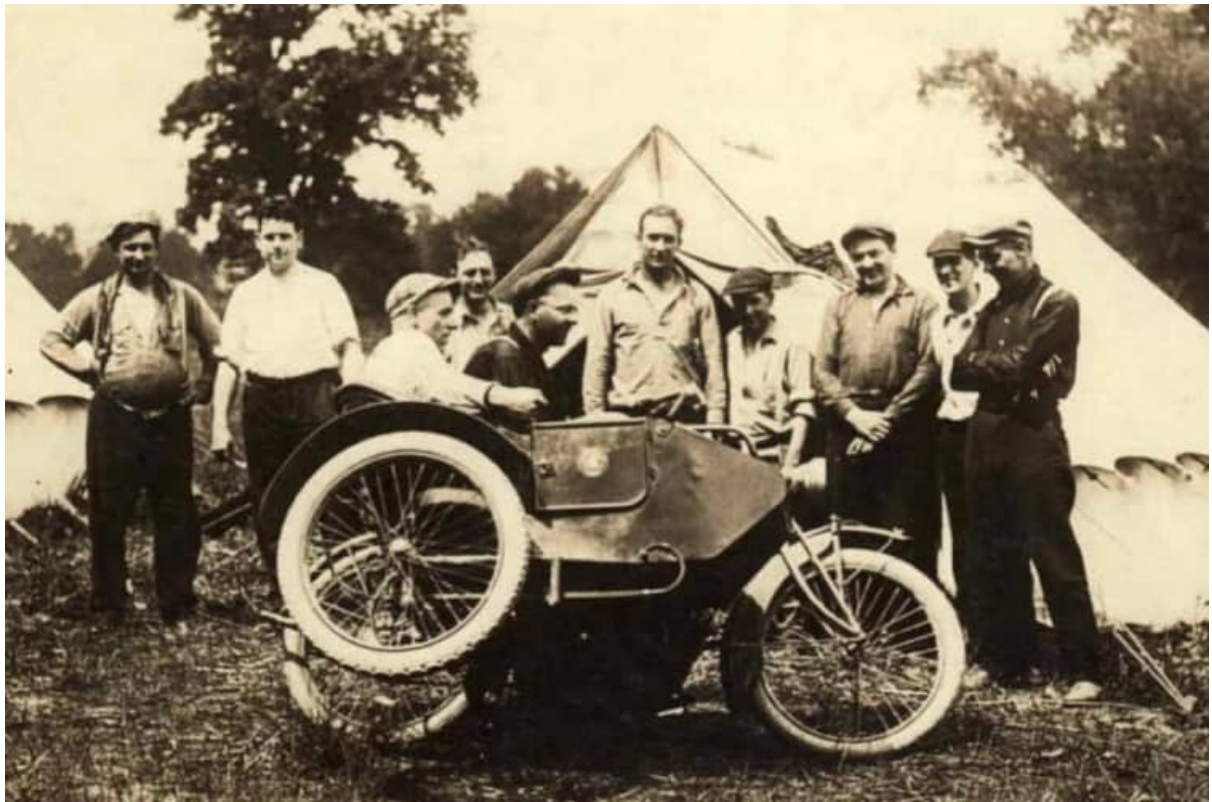














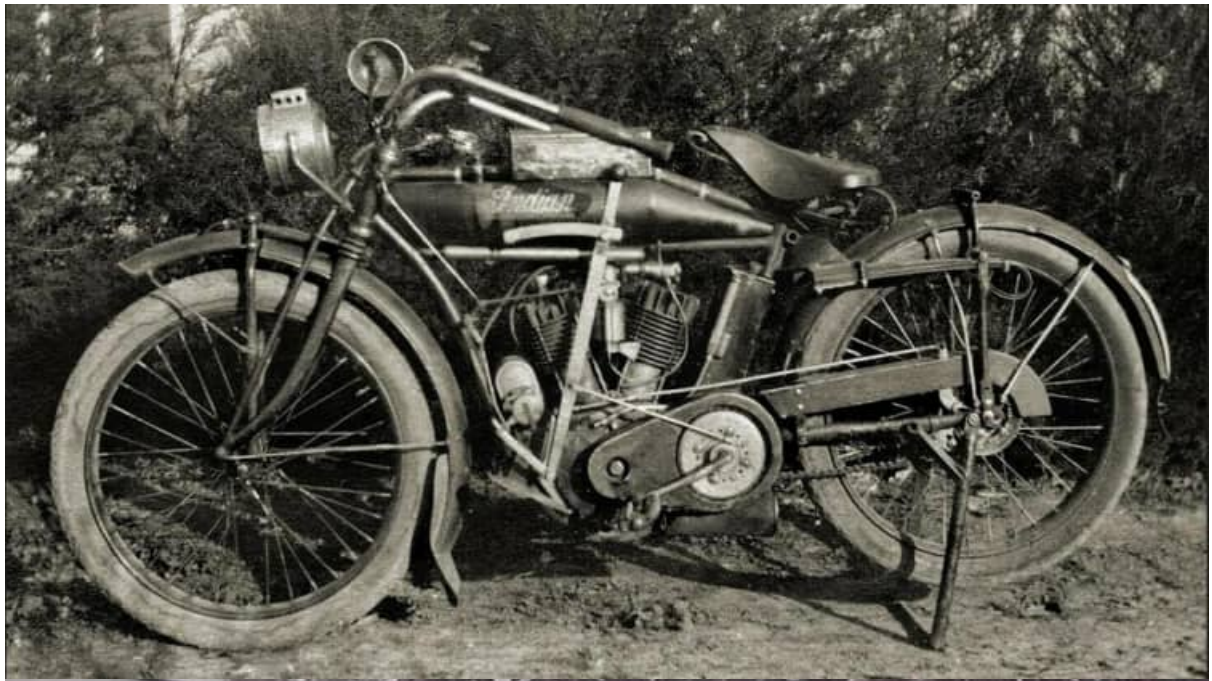


William Wells Bennett of Wichita, Kansas, wearing amazing gauntlets, pictured in 1910



at the start of a racing career that earned him a place in the AMA Motorcycle Hall of Fame.









Cool or what? There's something of Marlon Brando in *The Wild One* about this pic; but unlike the fictional Johnny in the movie, this Indian rider won his trophy. I assume he's the Butch Bittner who signed the photo. The caption tells us he won a 20-miler at Anaheim, California, in 1912.

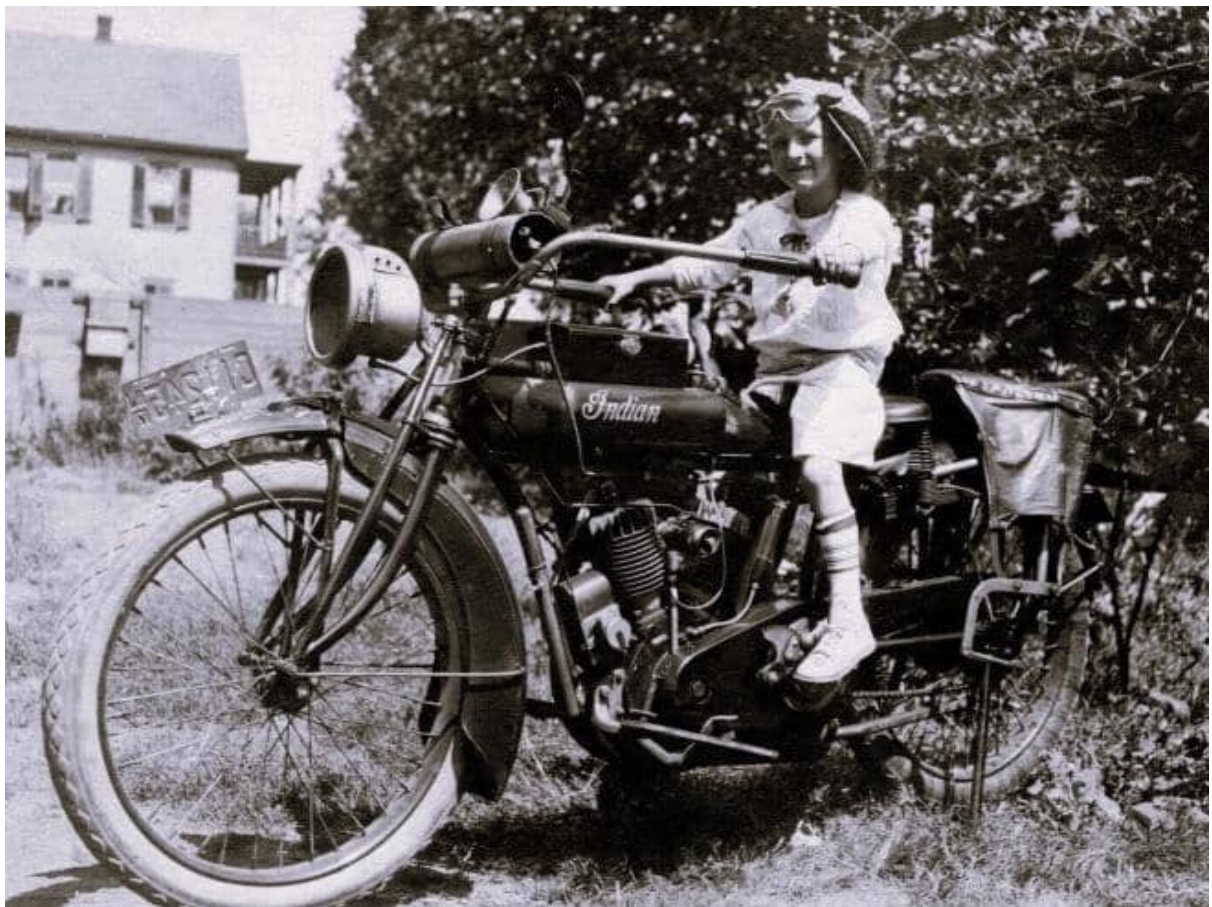


Another cool Indian rider, the great Jake de Rosier, pictured on the motordrome that finally claimed his life.





'Red' Parkhurst knew how to handle an Indian, but was also a member of the Harley Wrecking Crew.

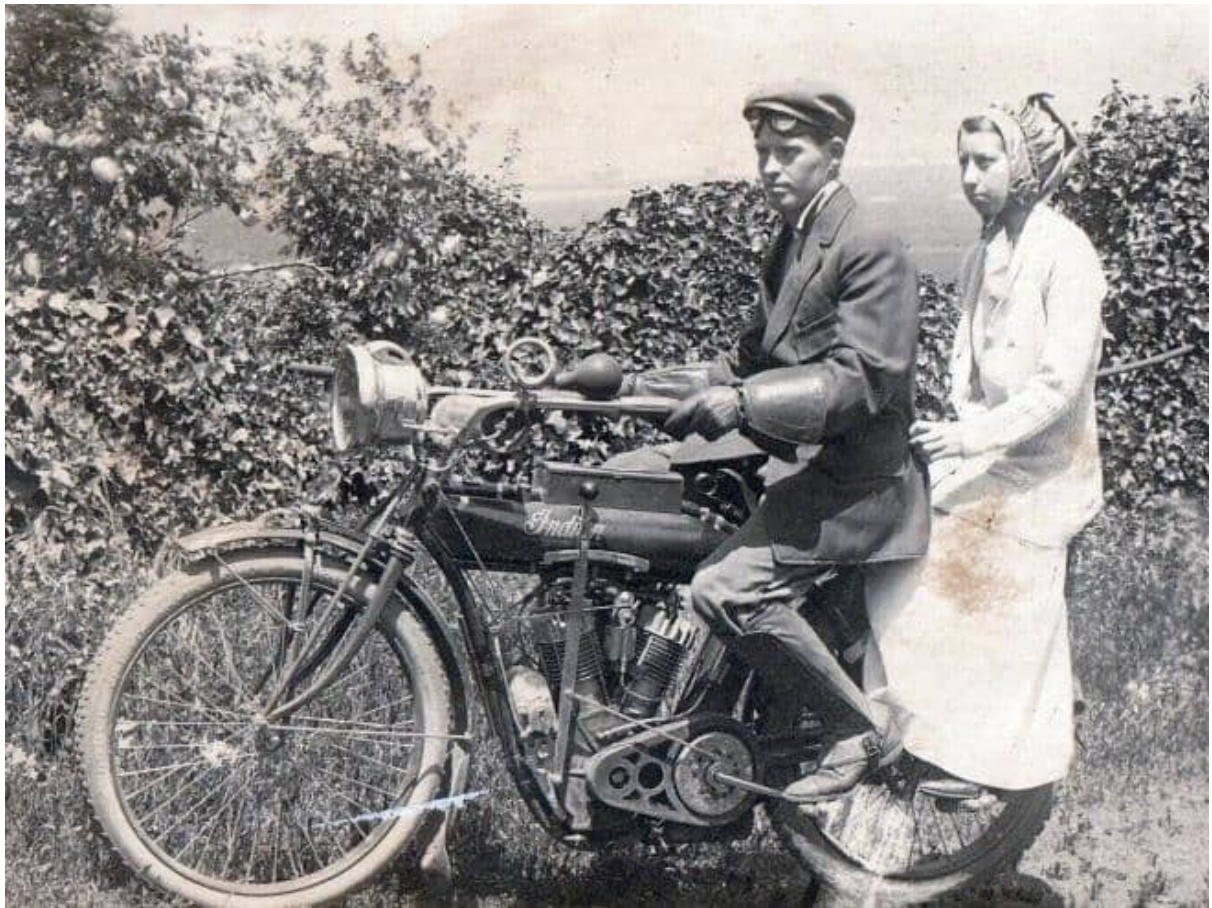








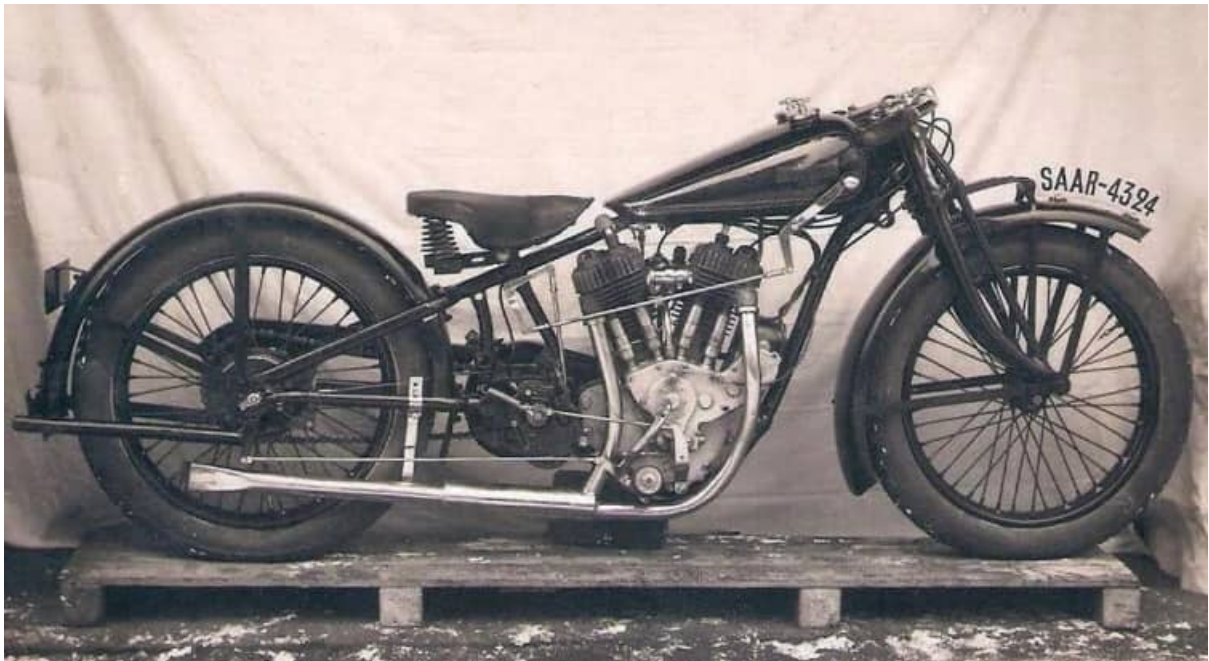




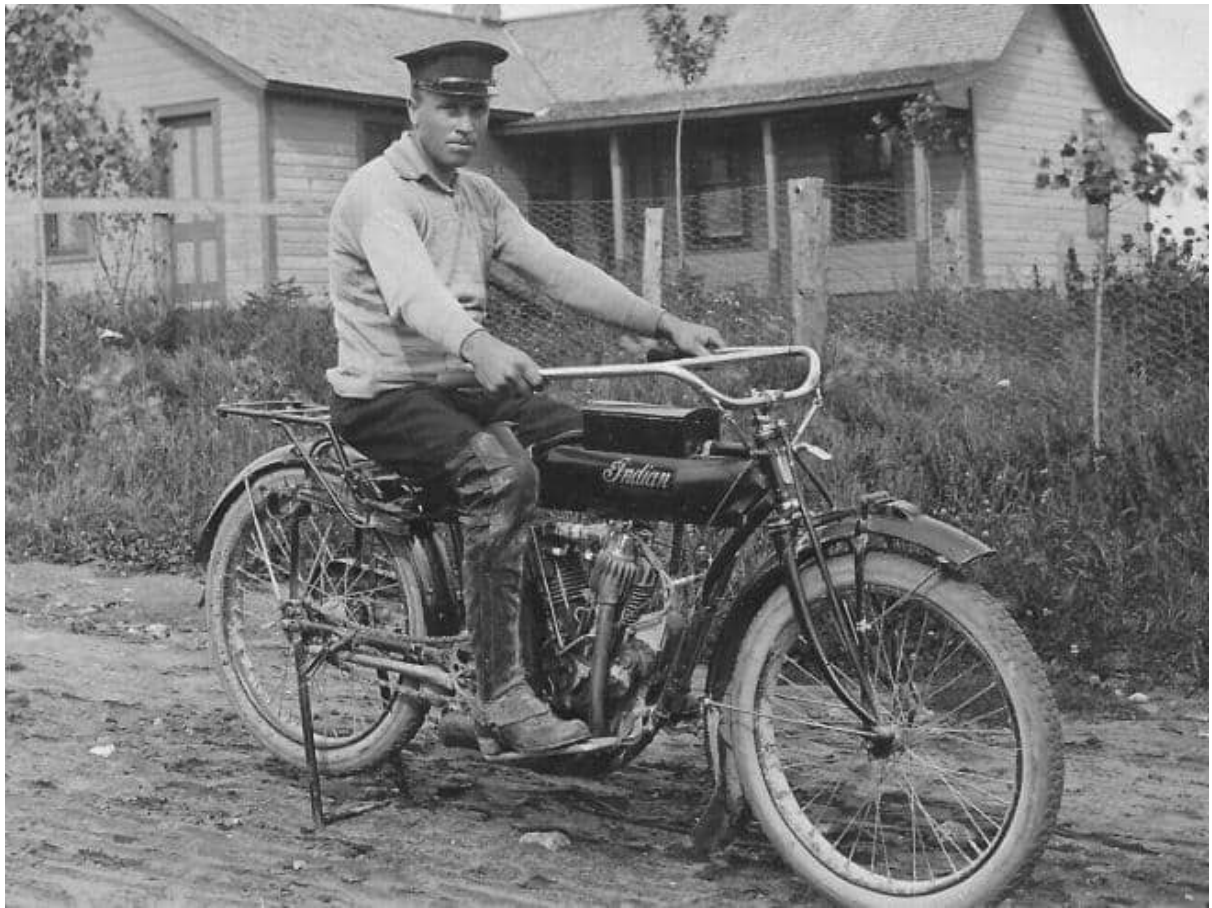




Judging by the registration this smartly turned-out enthusiast is in Dublin.













Indian works rider Fred Huyck at the Hawthorne Race Track in Cicero, Illinois.







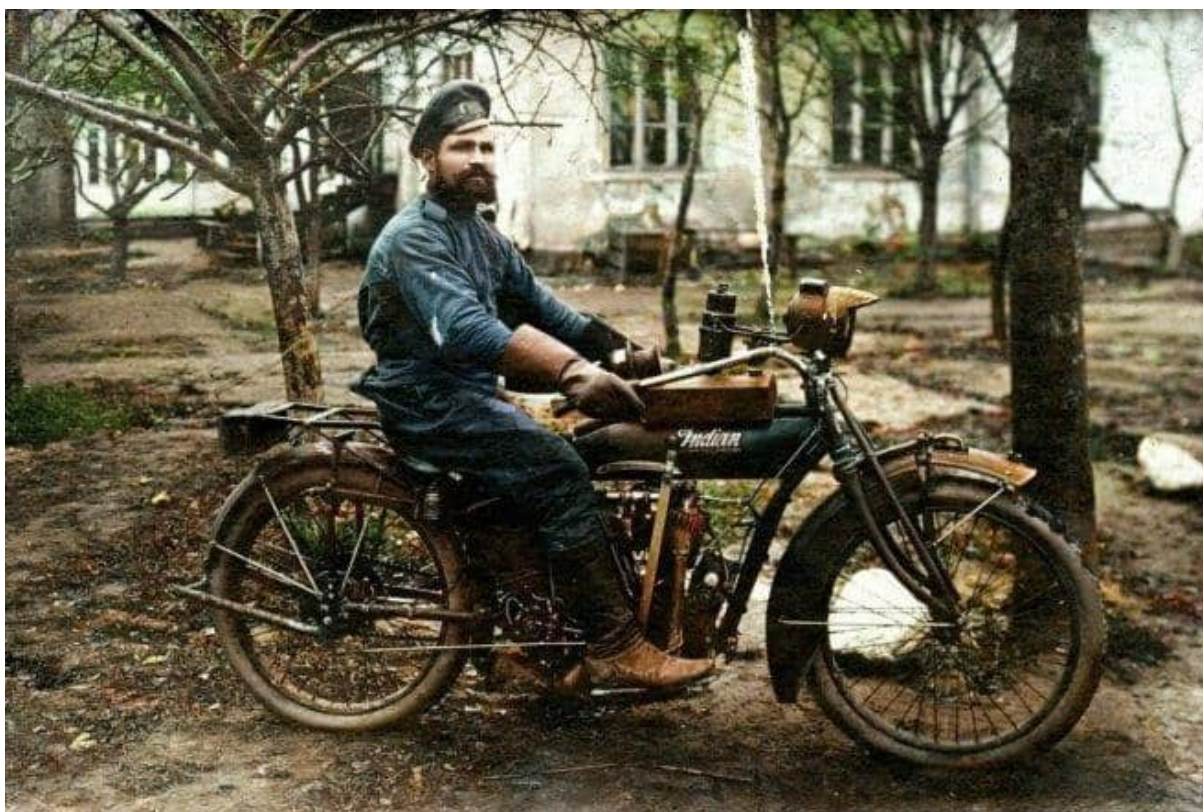




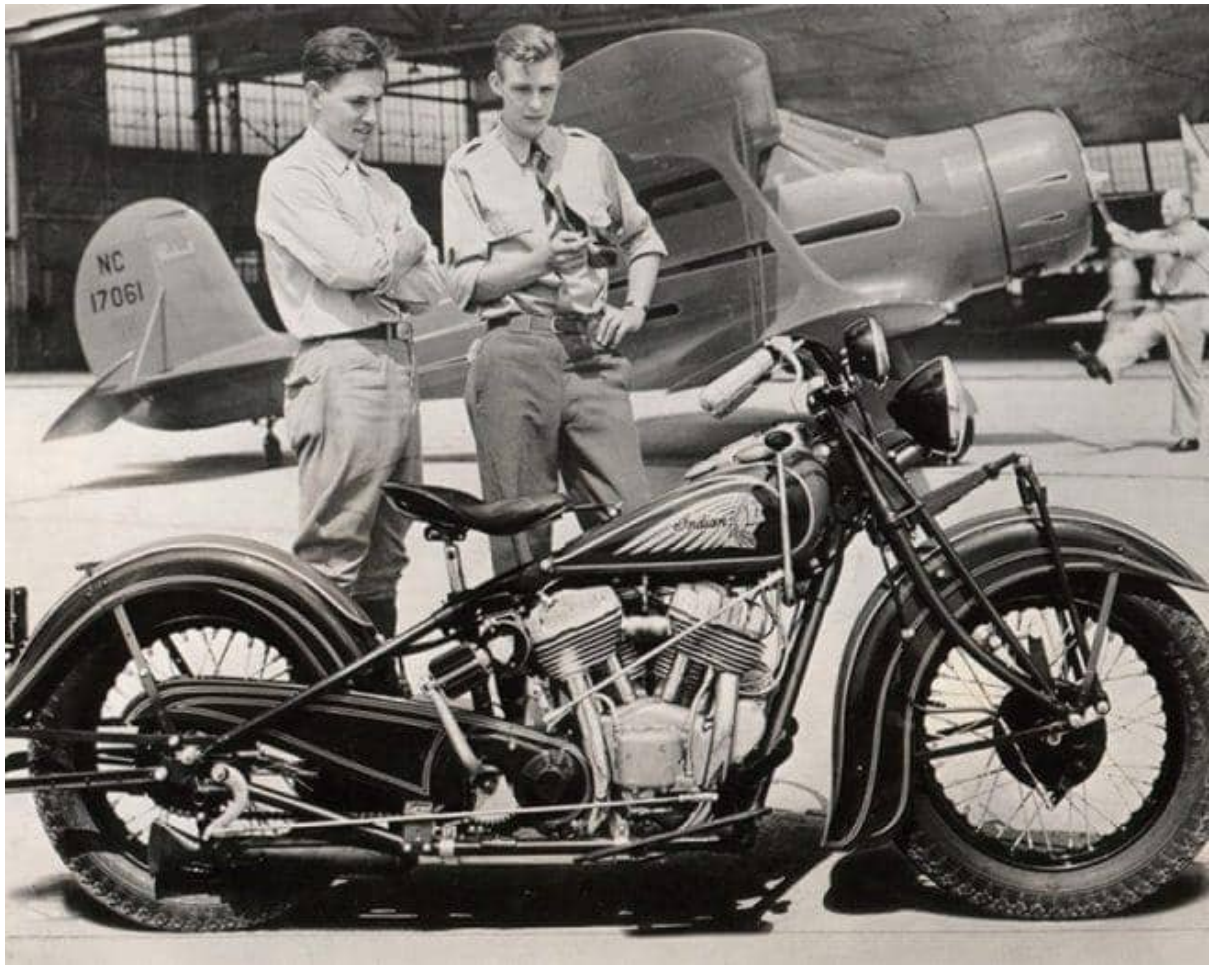
This little

Indian went to Italy...





...and this one went all the way to Russia.



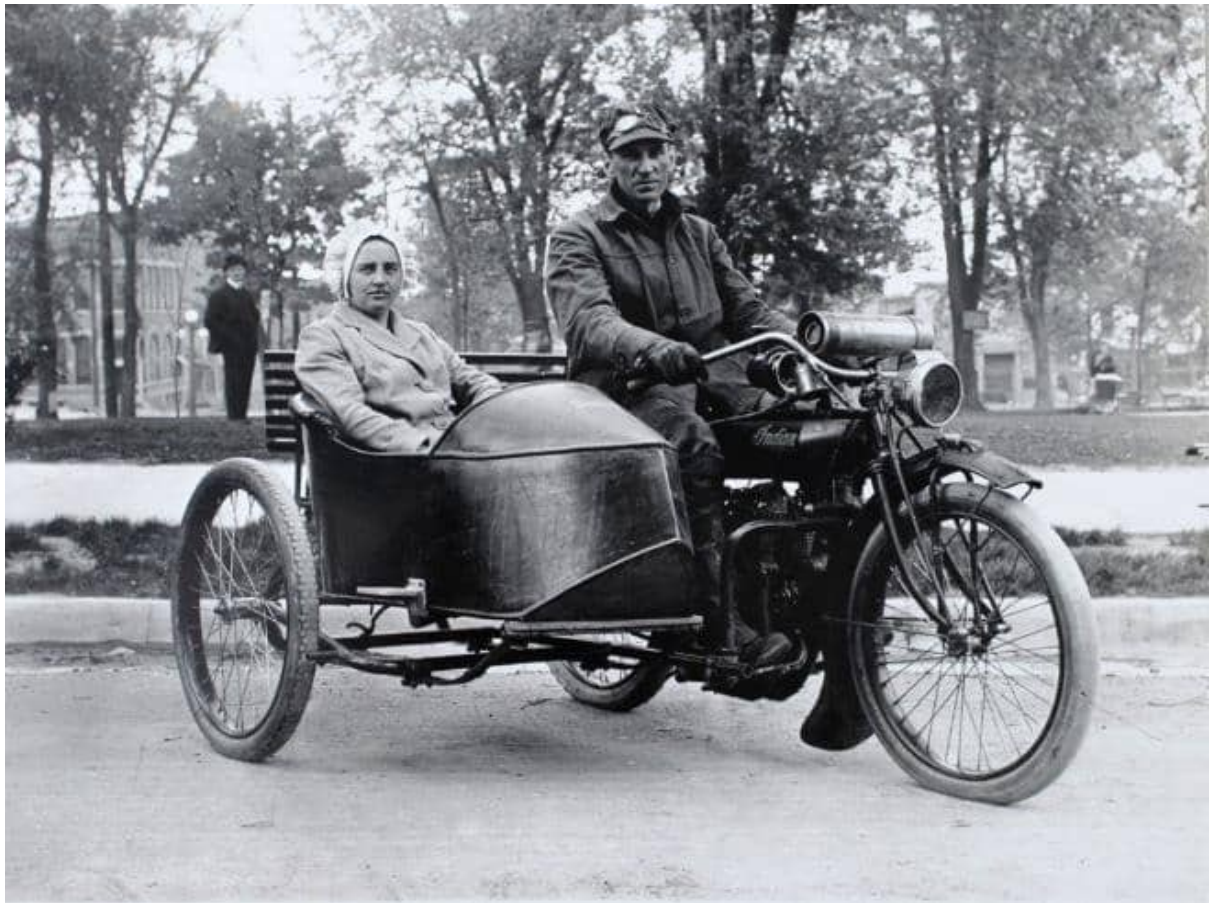
That's a cool Chief, but have you noticed the chap in the background about to start his plane.



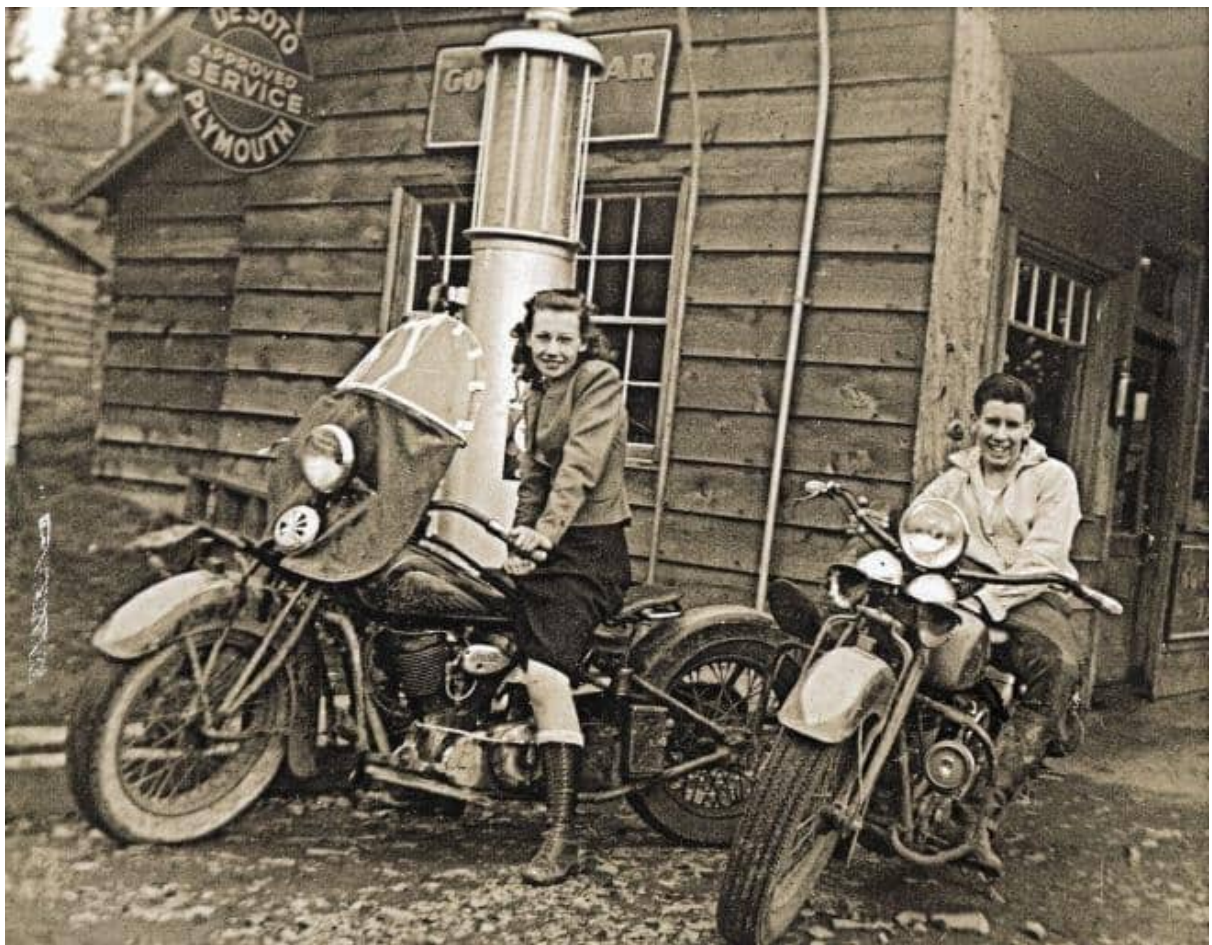














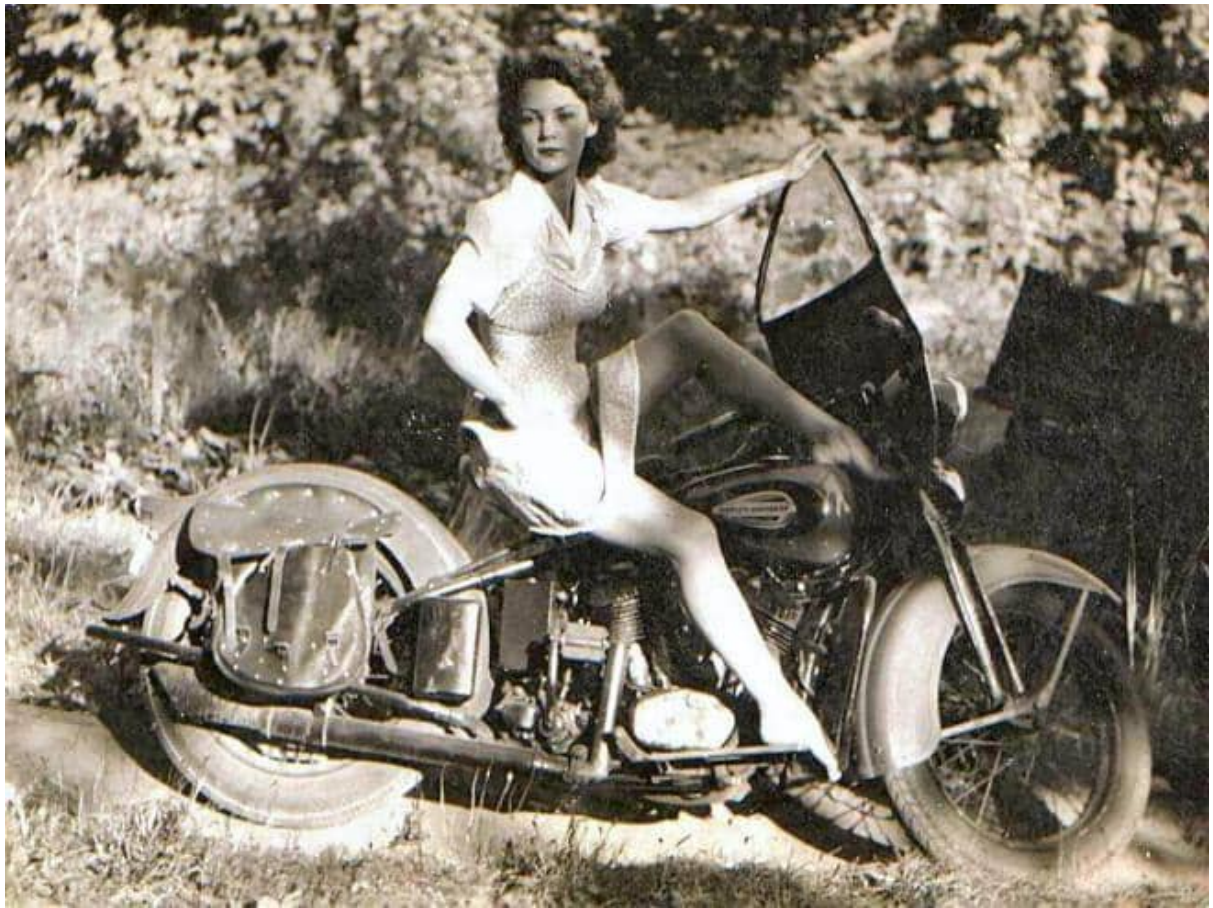




*It would be rude to leave out the Harley boys (and girls)...*

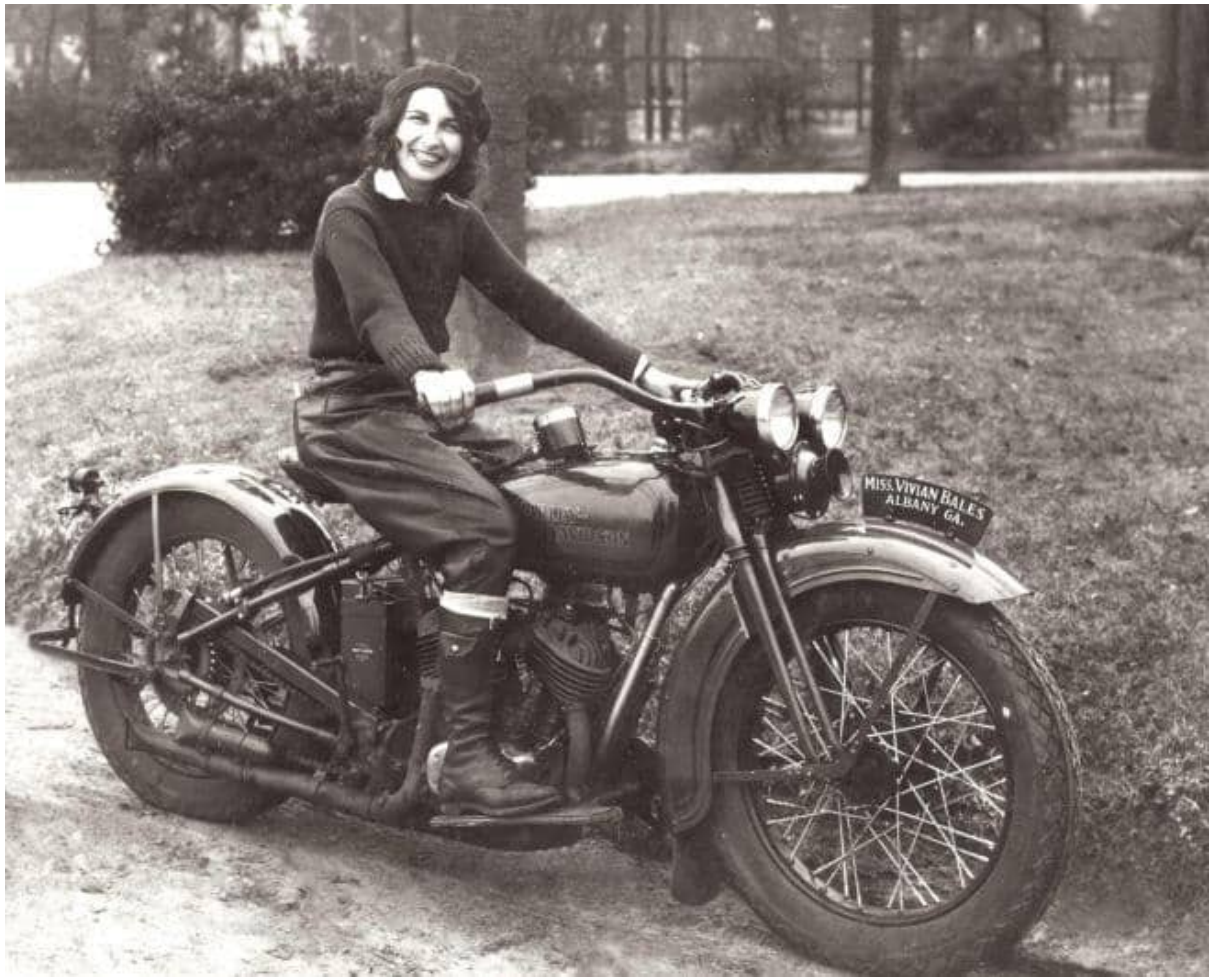












Vivian Bales and her 1929 Model D.





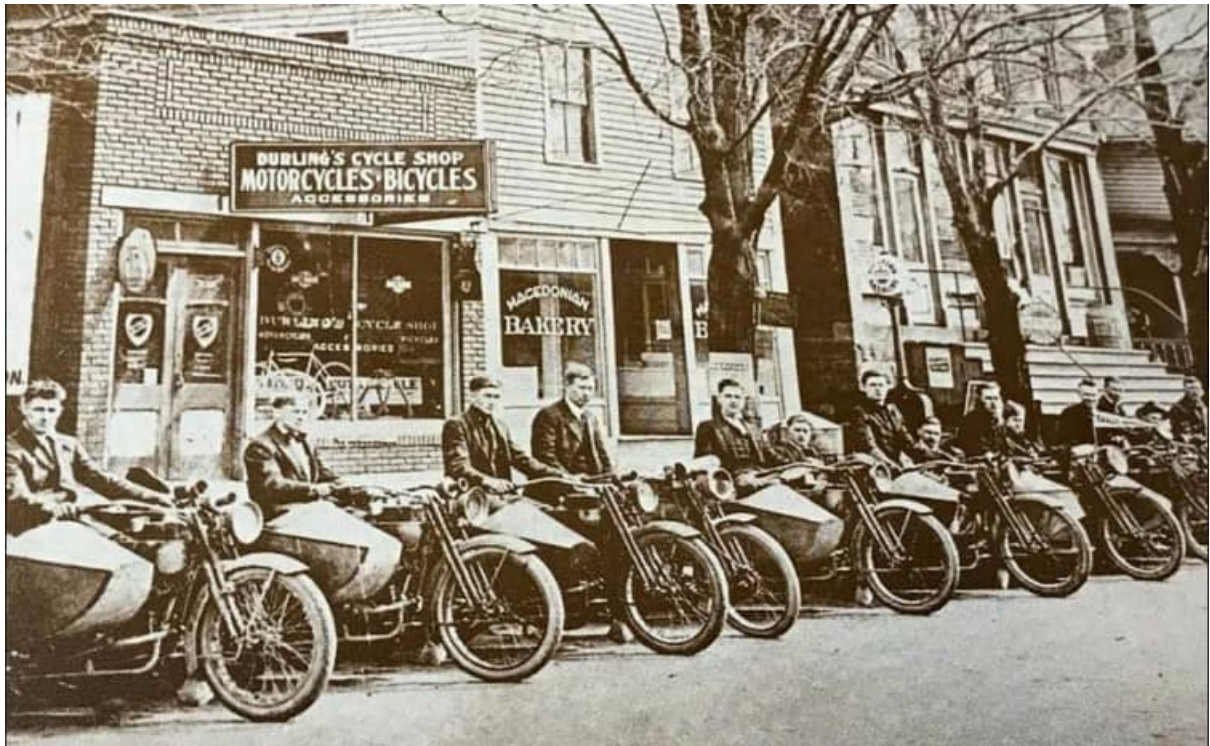












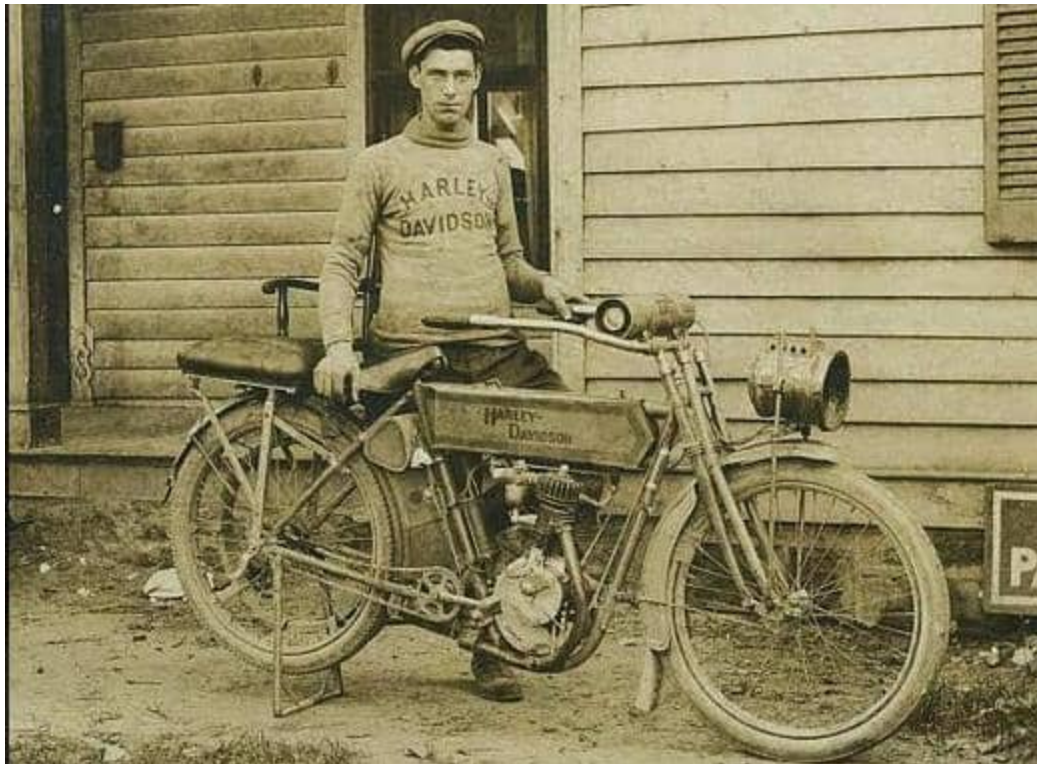




Sacramento, 1910.



1914, Portland, Oregon.

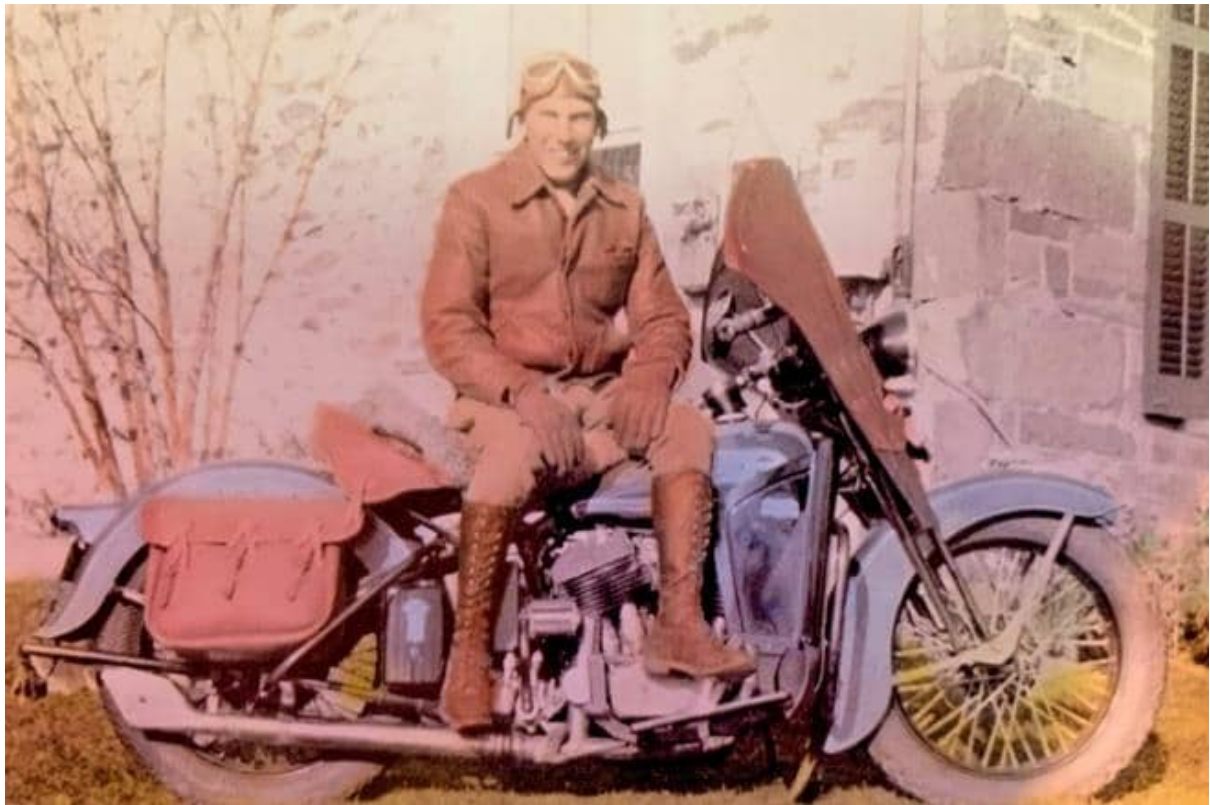




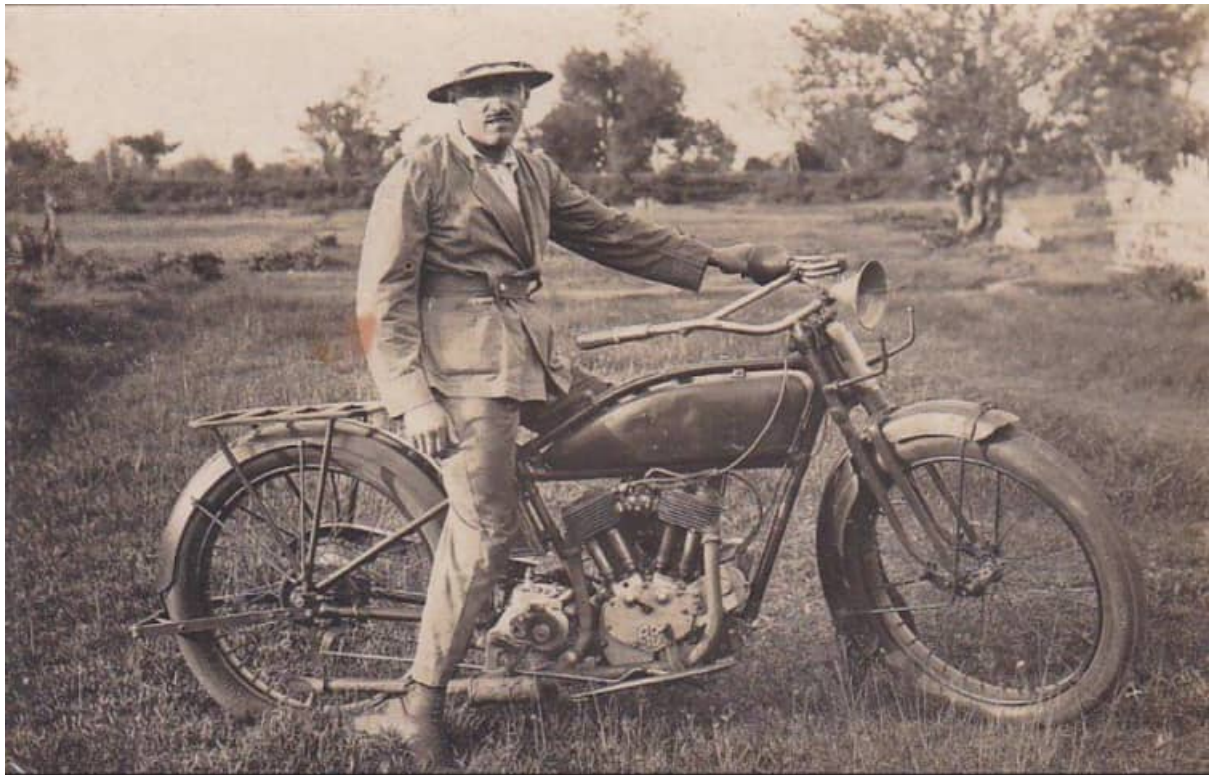








This Harley combo with its delightful sunshade for the passenger (who is presumably wielding the camera) was pictured in the first year of peace.

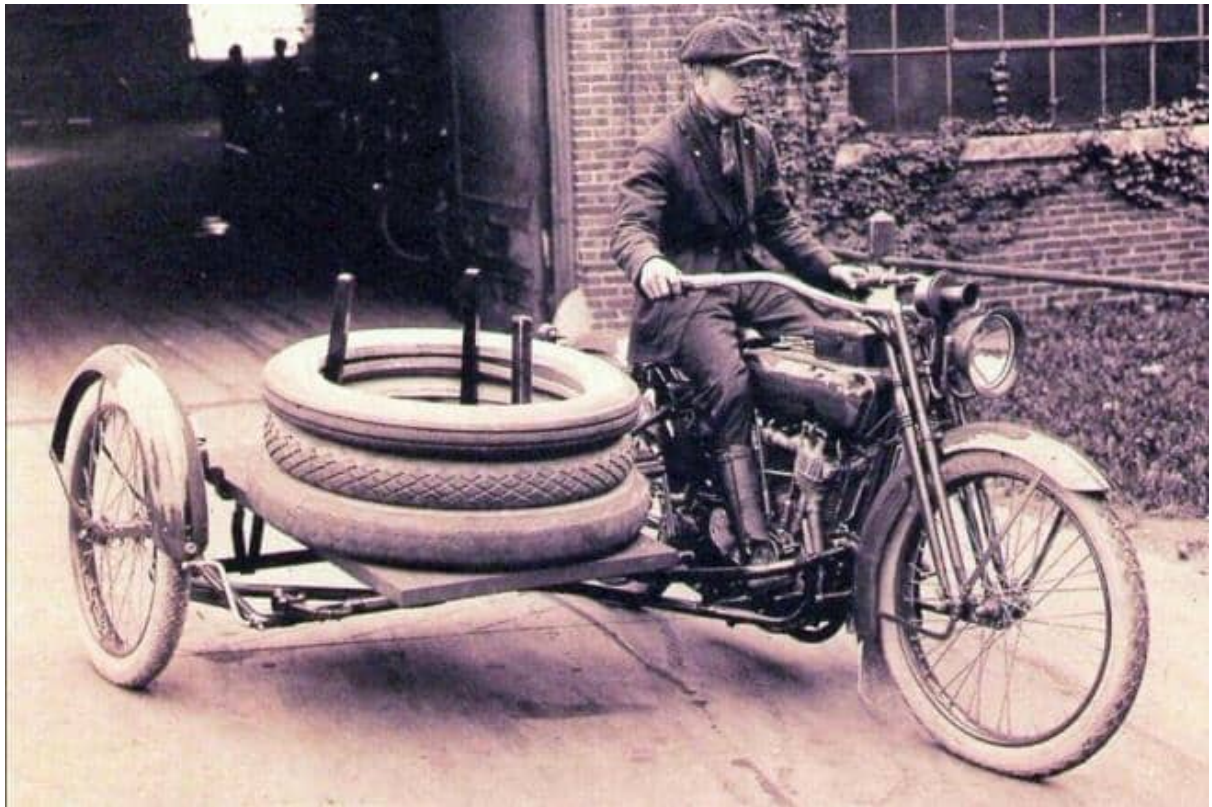


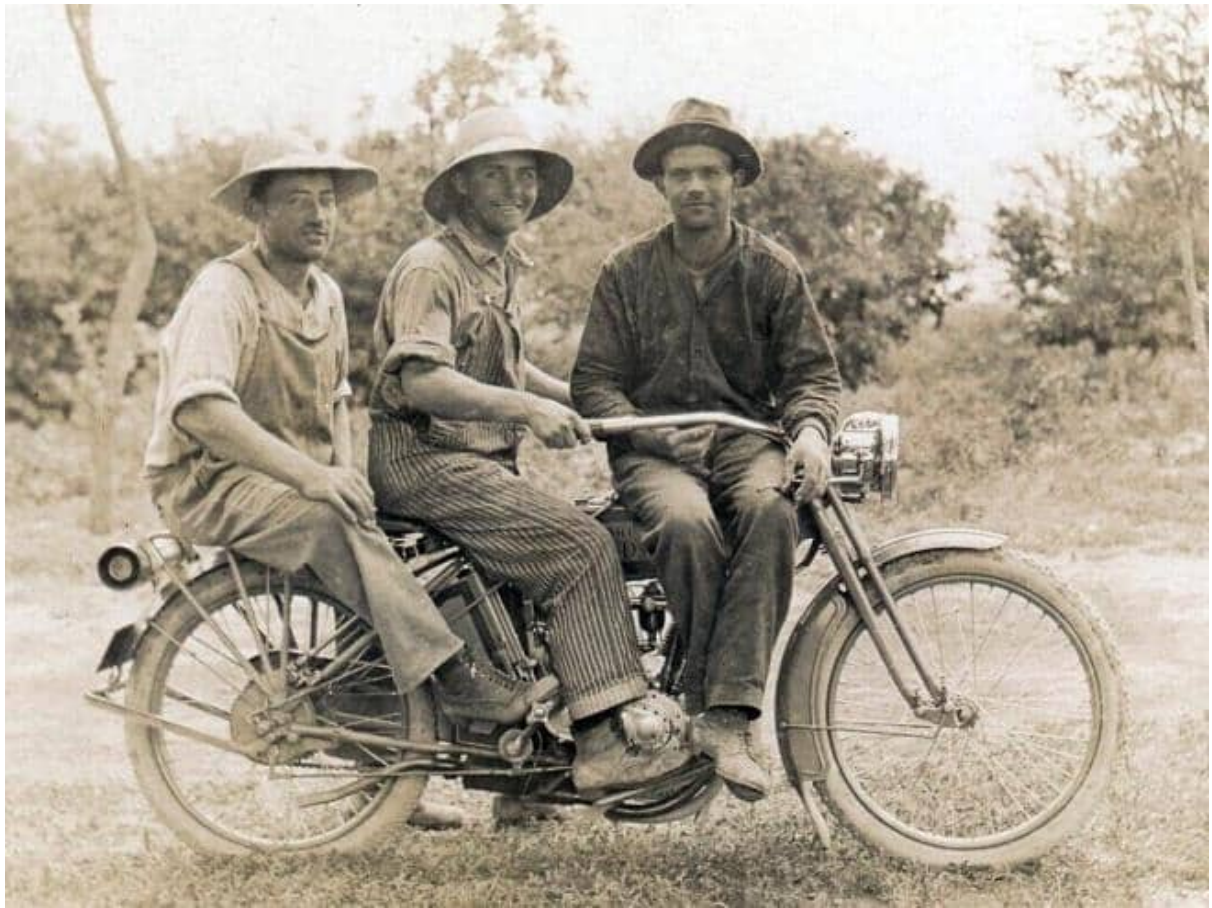
















This Harley was pictured on Pikes Peak, a 14,000ft acclivity in Colorado.



This cop looks pretty rural.





This cop rode his Harley in Detroit in 1913.

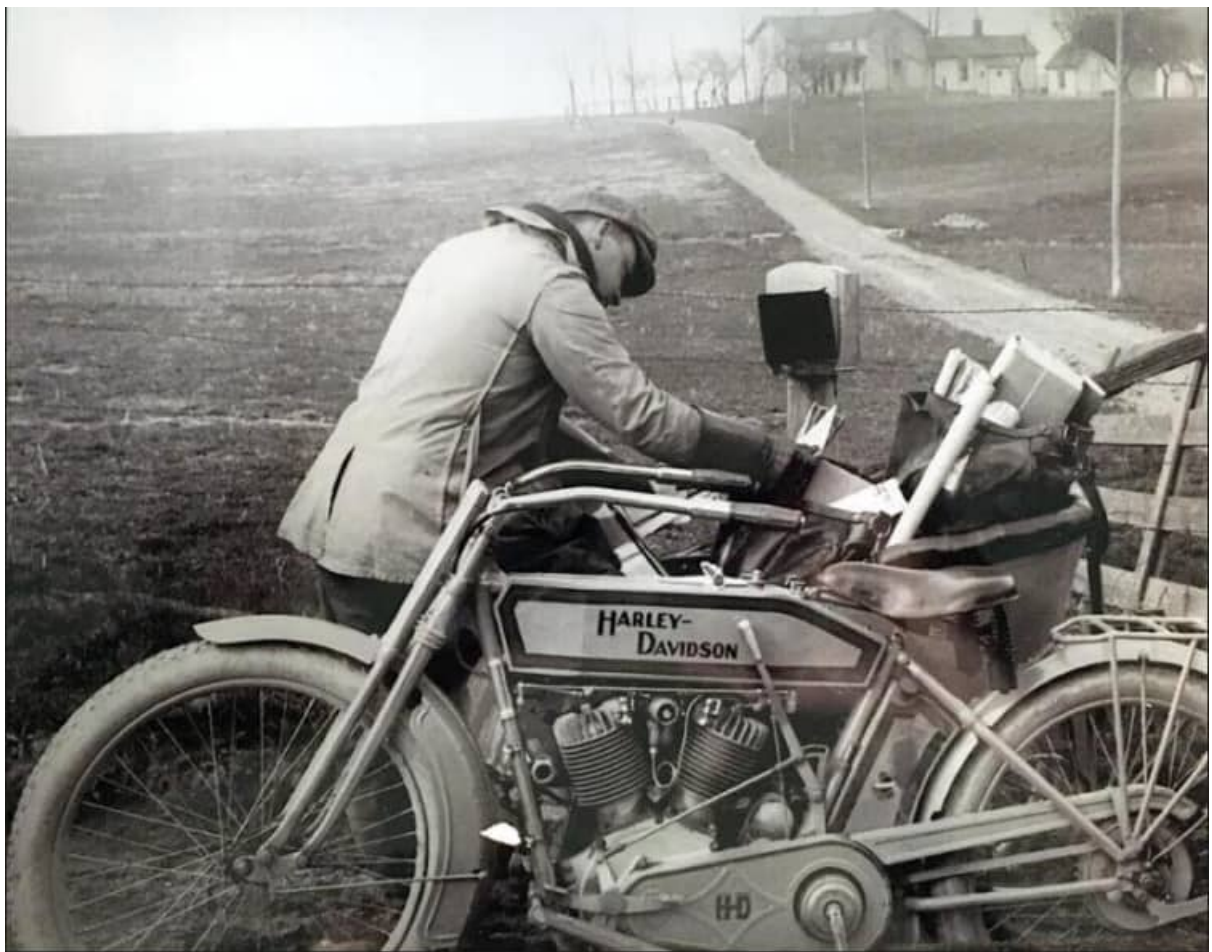
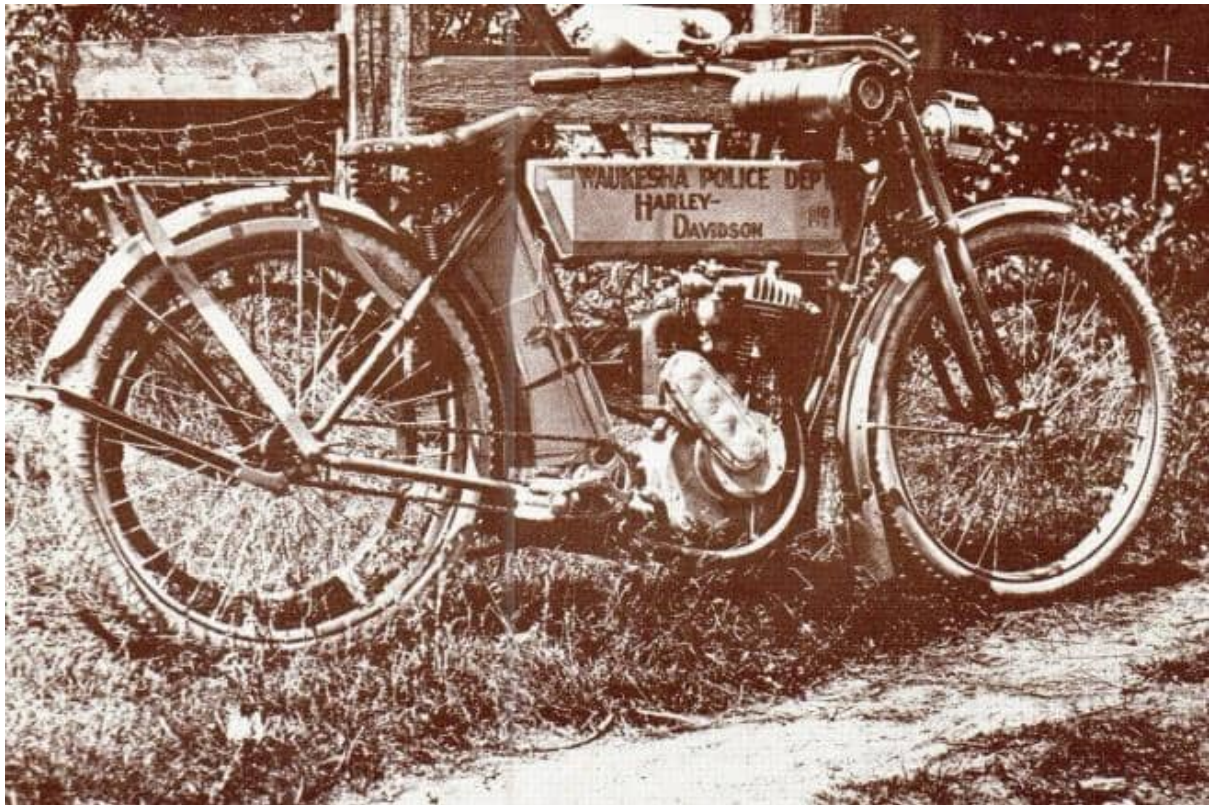


Also 1913.



These lads were pictured in 1914.





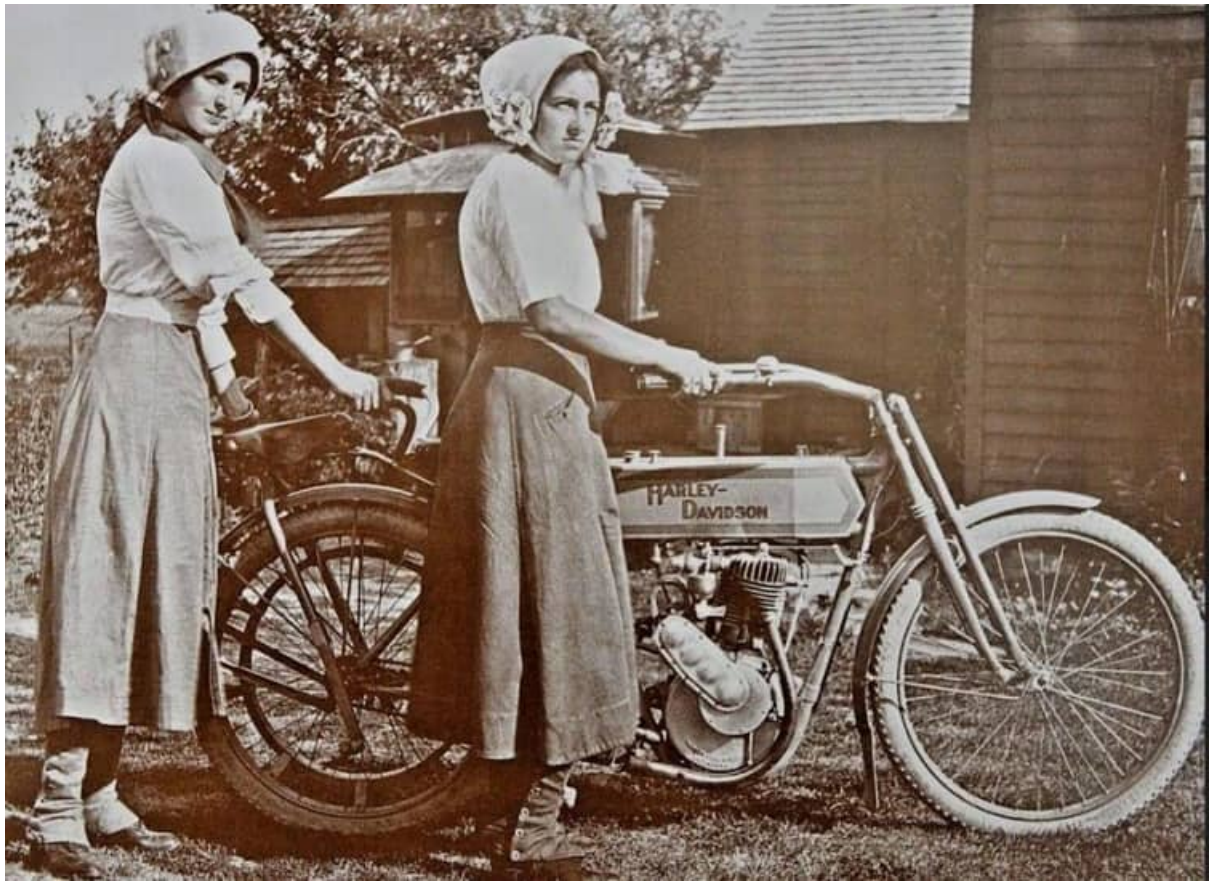


Same year, same marque.













This Harley combo was bought by a Texan manicurist named Della Crewe after a young member of her family suggested she ought to get out more. You'll find her in 1914.









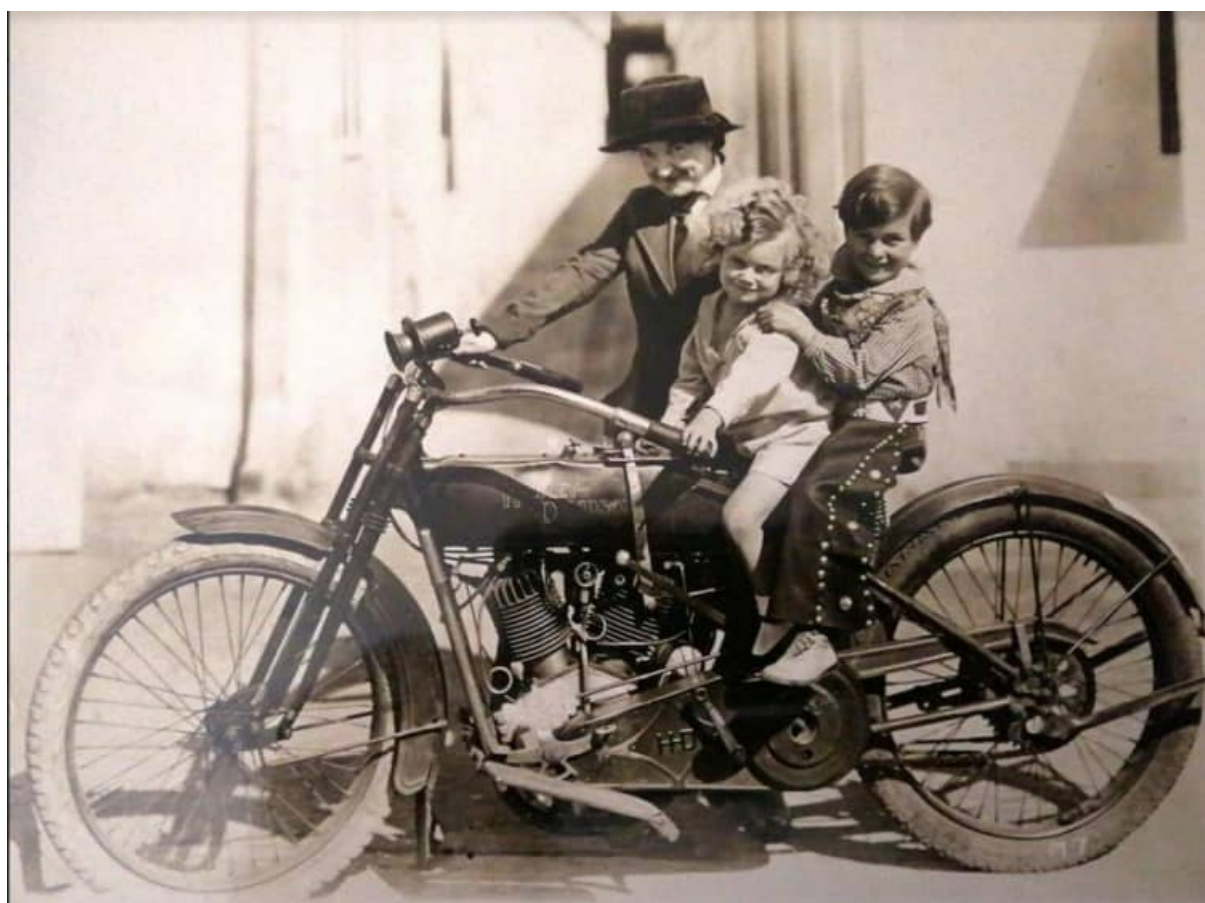


The Milwaukee MCC rode Harleys—no surprise there—but these chaps clearly bought there bikes in the same year, in this case 1916.









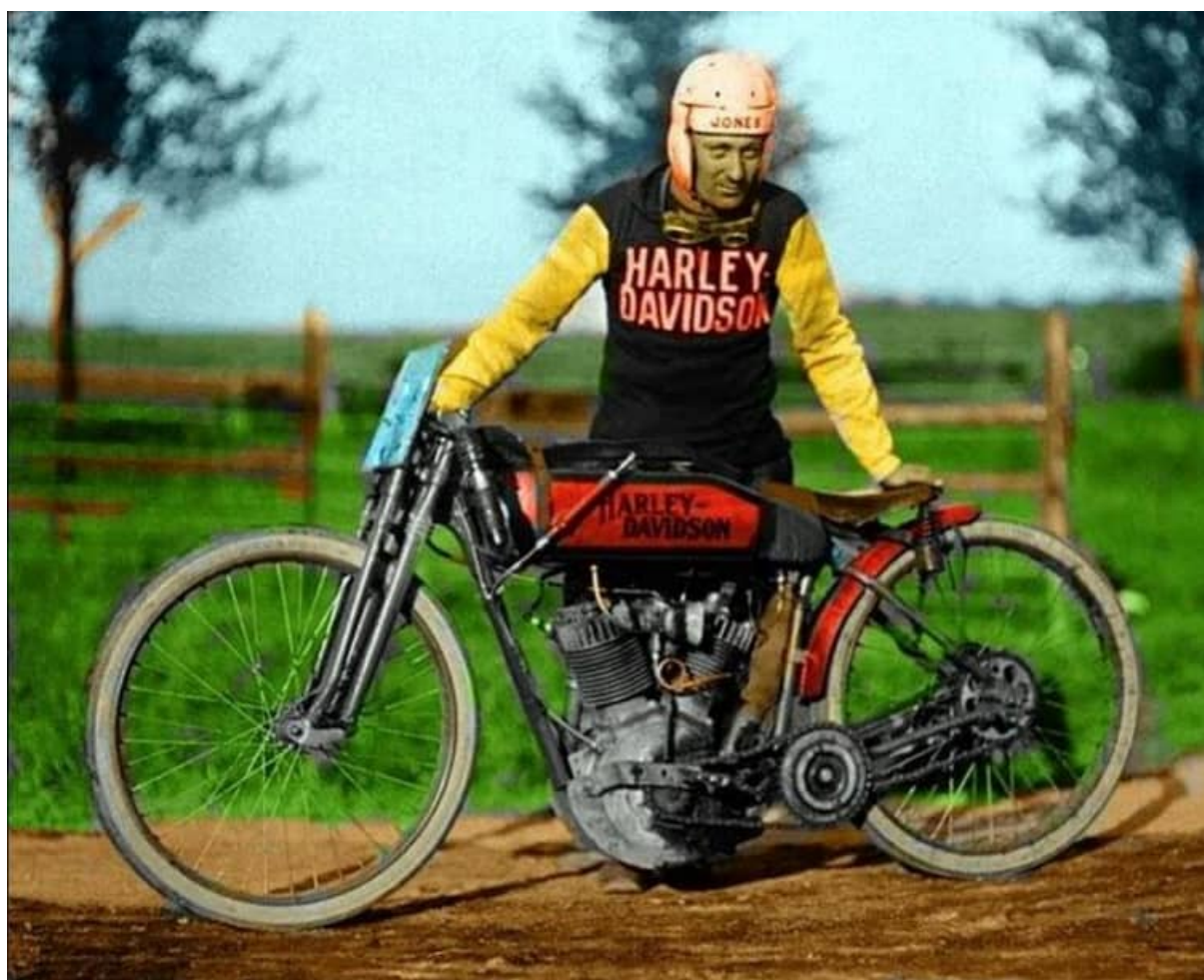


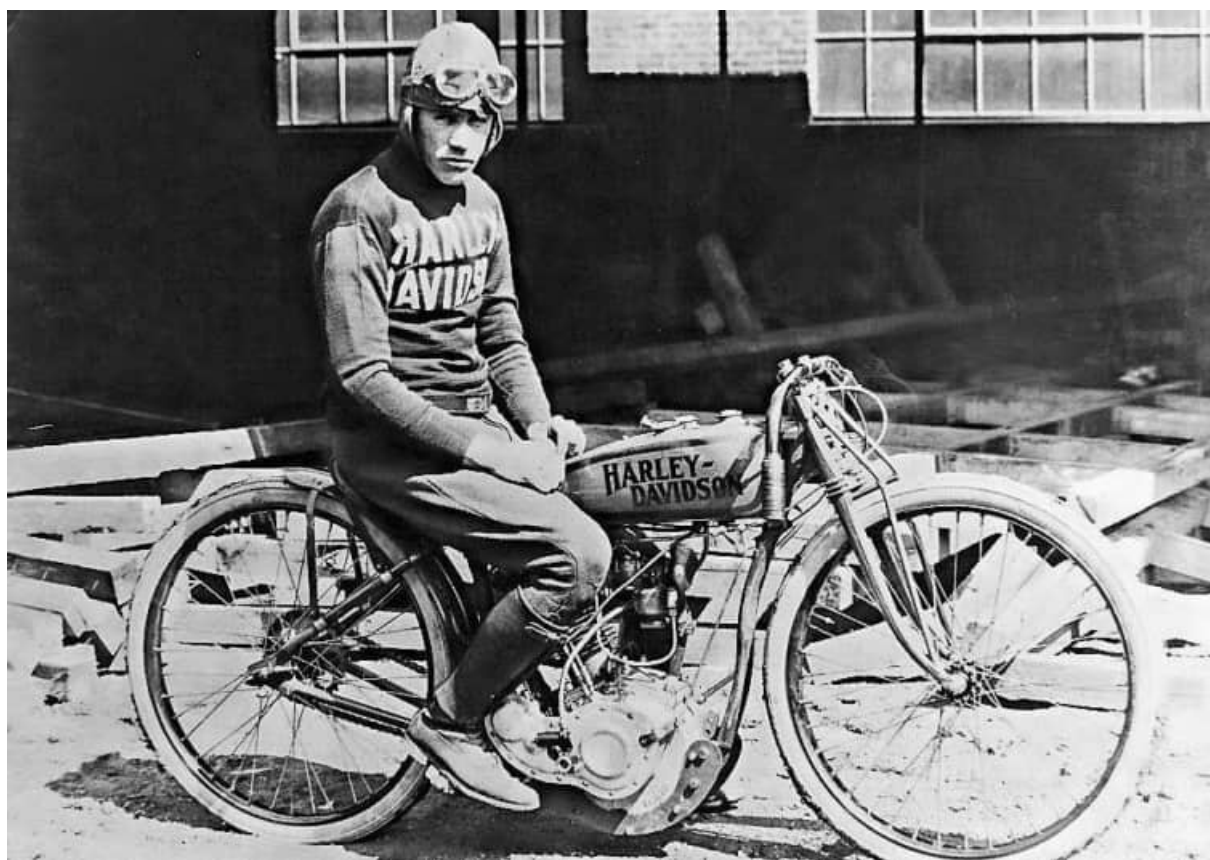


GERLACH BROS.  
MARION, S. D.

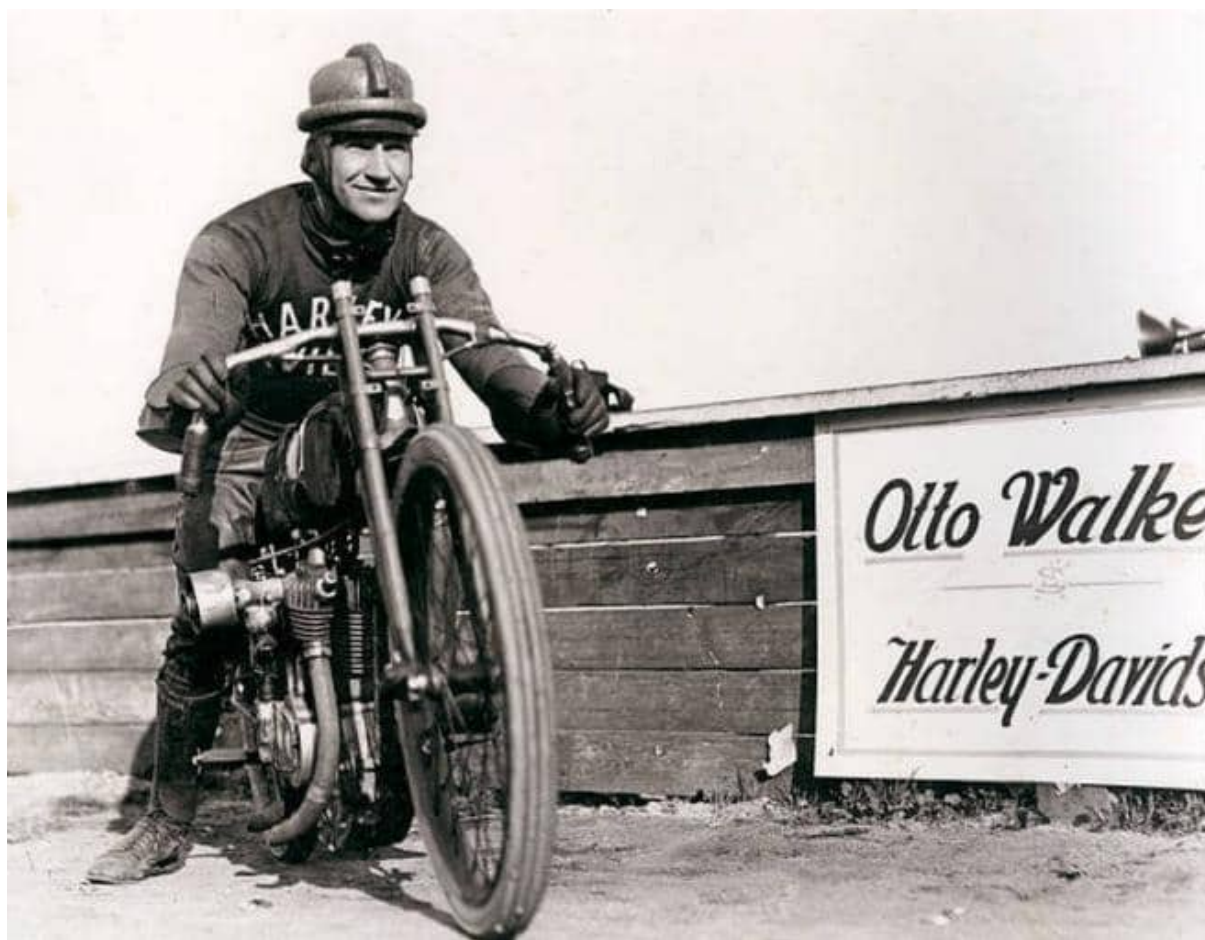














We're in Toledo, Ohio.





Albert 'Shrimp' Burns, 1919.



Wrecking Crew member John Ewen and his kid brother.



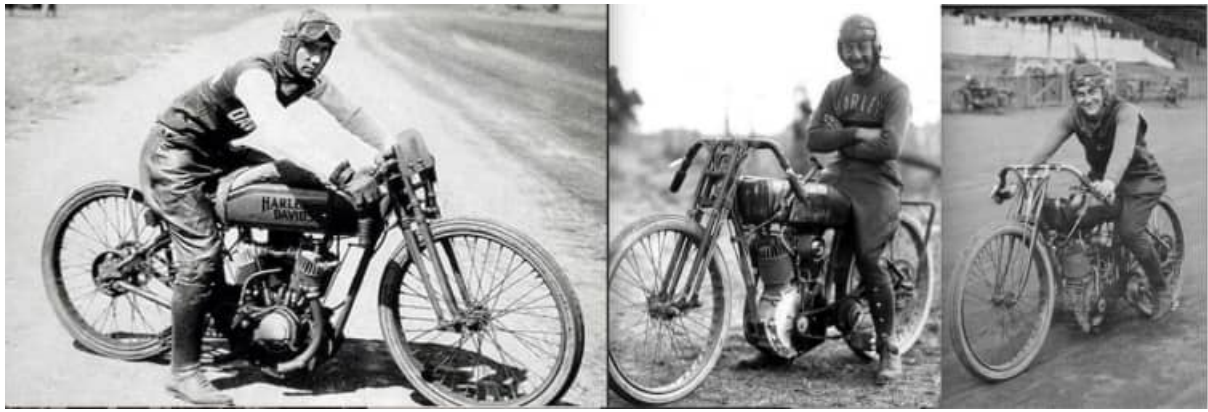




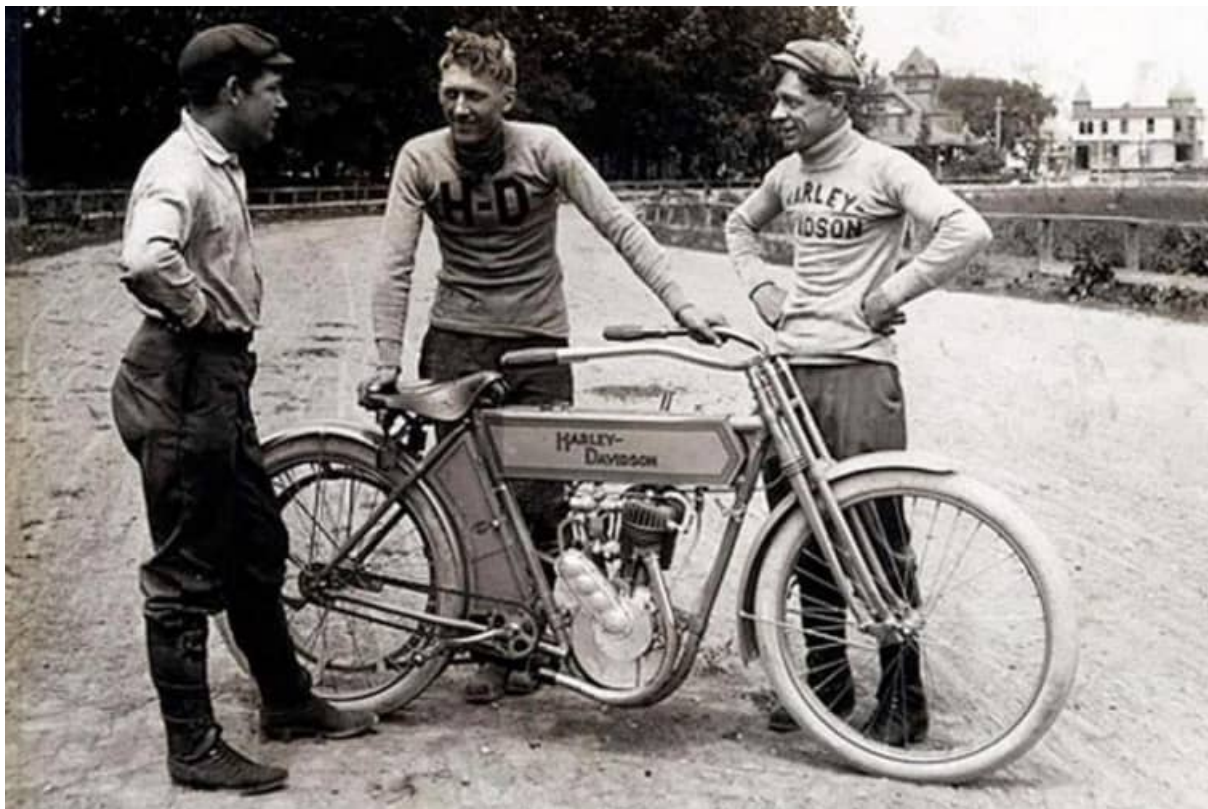
No further details to hand but it seems Harley had added to its tally of records.







Harley teamsters Jim Davis, Maldwyn Jones and Irving Janke.



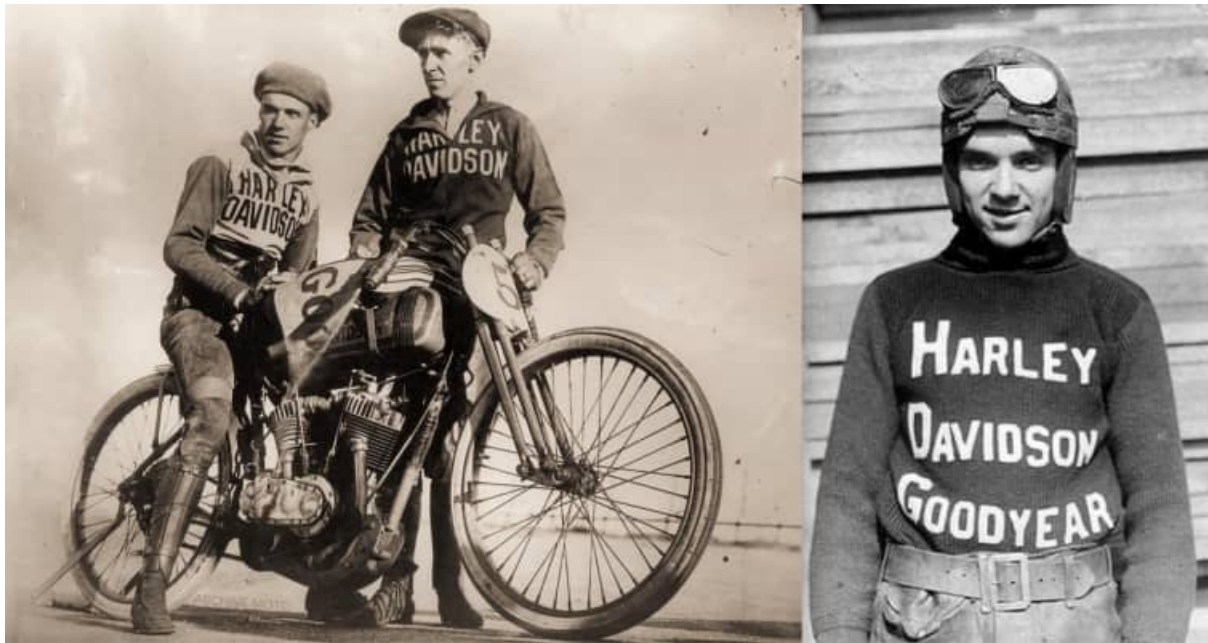
This Harley racer was pictured in 1910.



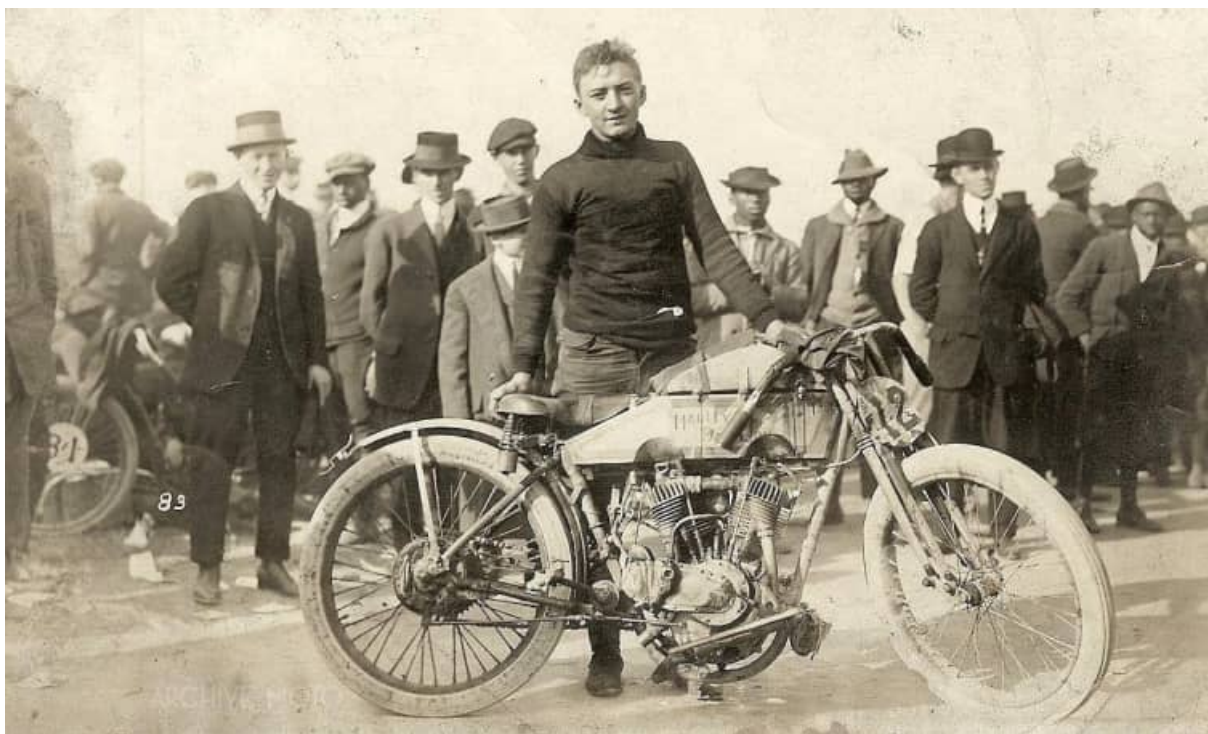
This snap dates from 1920.







Albert 'Shrimp' Burns and his spannerman at the 200 Mile National Championship race at Ascot Park on 22 June 1919. He won the 100-mile championship that year before switching to the Indian tribe.



Martin Schroeder was a member of Harley-Davidson's first official racing team. He's pictured with his narrow-case 11K factory racer at the FAM's 300 Mile Grand Prize race in November 1914.



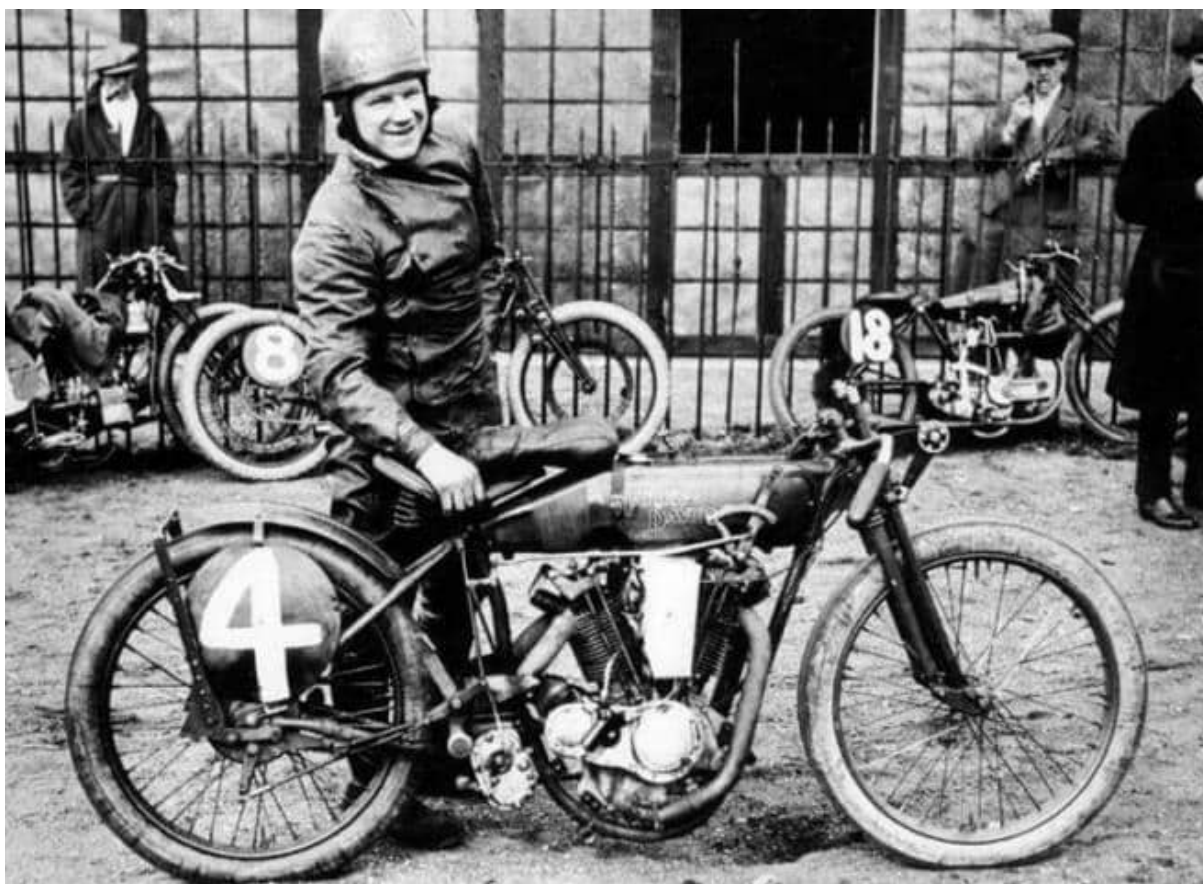


This is Bill Minnick.

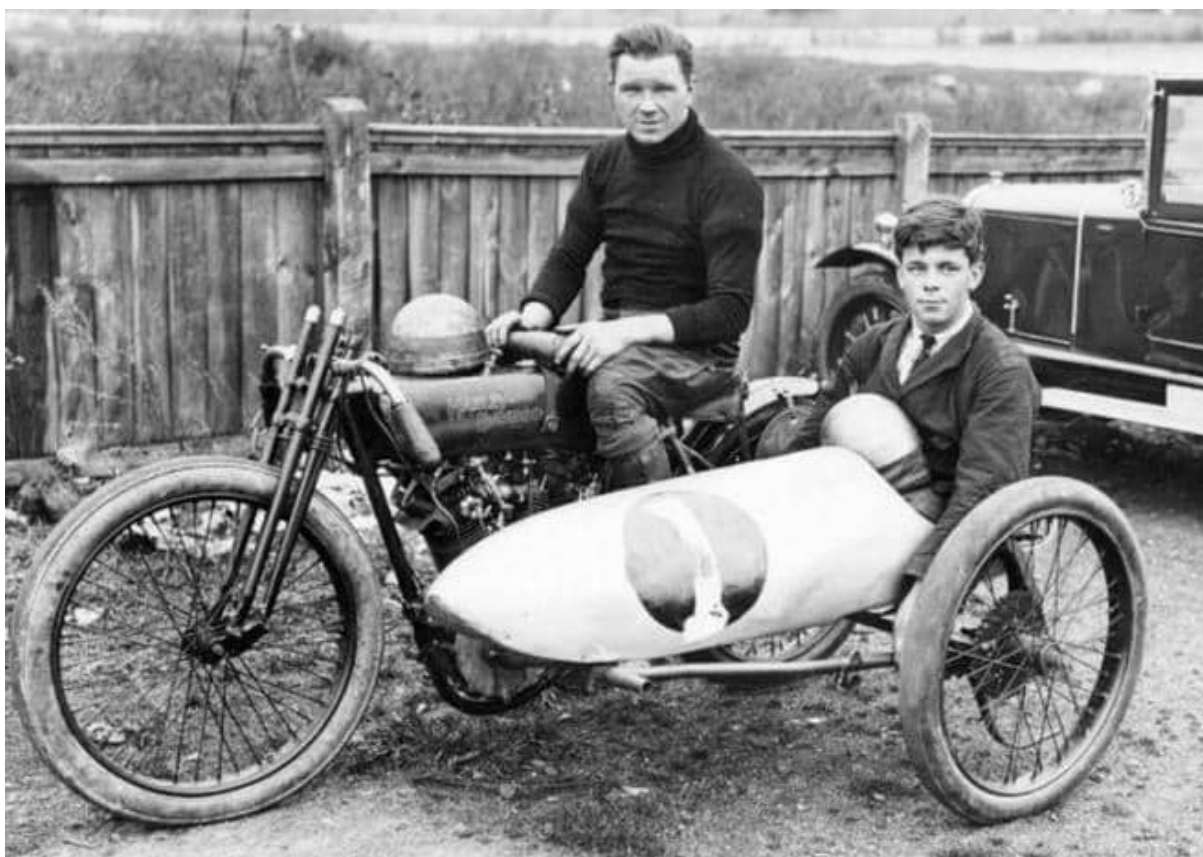


Bill Brier was another Harley ace; he's pictured at the Sioux City track in 1915.





Yes, Brits appreciated Harley Davidsons too. 'Flying Freddie' Dixon is pictured with his Harley in 1923, the year he won the first sidecar TT with a banking combo he designed...



...and here's Dixon with a racing Harley outfit.





Say hello to Joe Petrali, who clearly knew how to make a Harley stand up and dance.







Harley-Davidson Wrecking Crew member Fred Ludlow posing onboard his teammate Otto Walker's white Banjo 2-Cam 8-Valve factory special at Portland's Rose City Speedway in May 1921.



It's July 4th 1925, the Harley-Davidson Wrecking Crew with their Two Cam racers at Altona, NY.

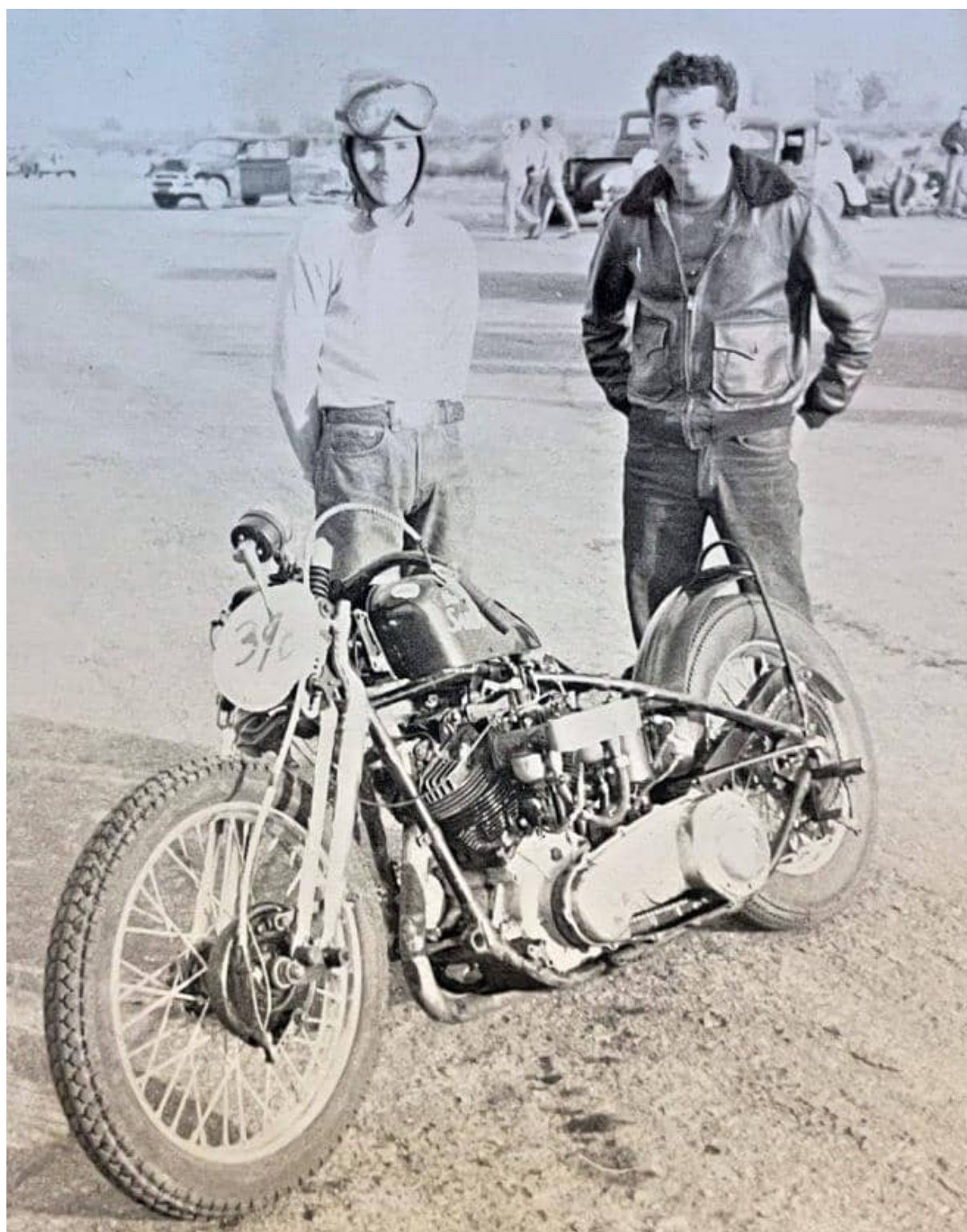


Freddie Ludlow, Ralph Hepburn, Albert 'Shrimp' Burns, and Otto Walker.





This Harley rider, with his cup on the front of his bike (just like Brando in *The Wild Ones*) was pictured in 1922.

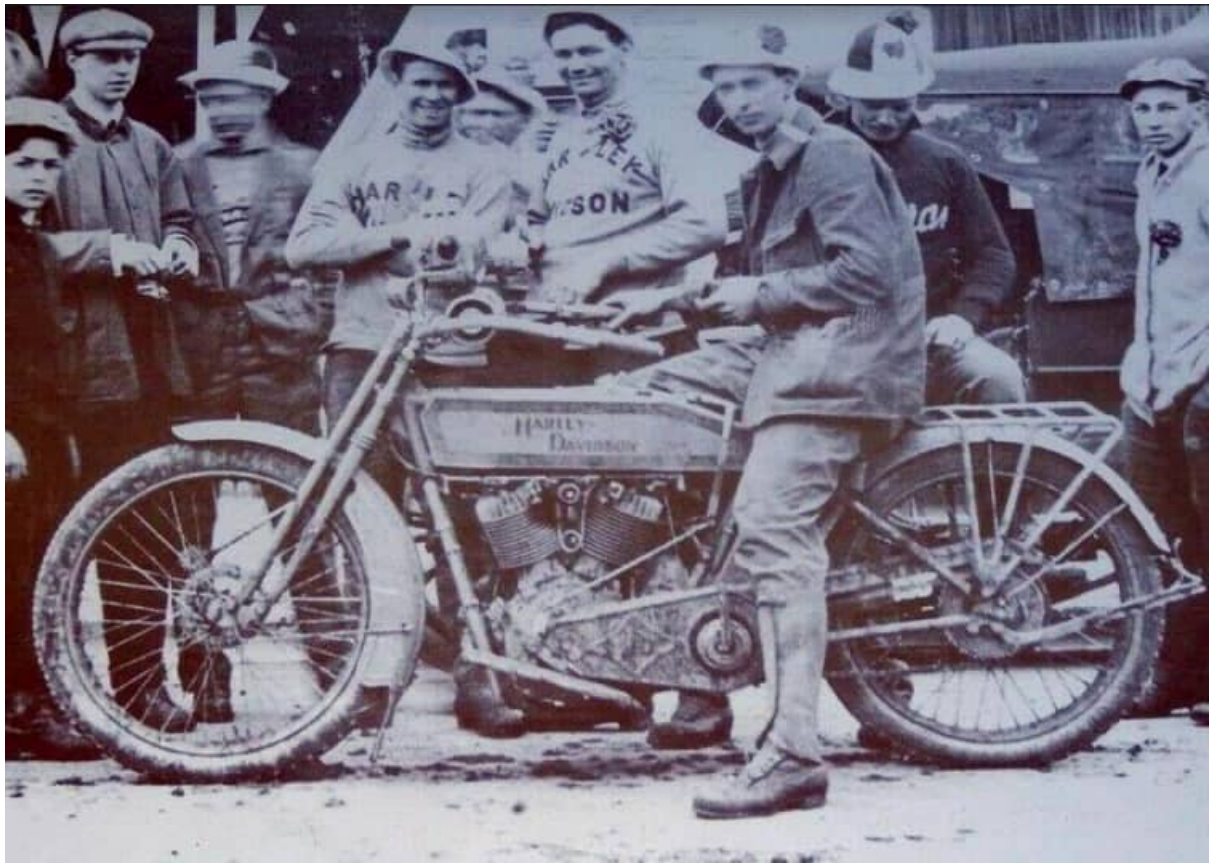














In the 1920s Harley sidecars (I believe our American chums call them sidehacks) were hand made.





Gertrude Hoffman, popular artist of the Orpheum Theatre Circuit, in her Harley-Davidson.



Harry & Etta Conley of the Pantages Circuit, playing  
"At The Old Cross Roads," in their Harley-Davidson.

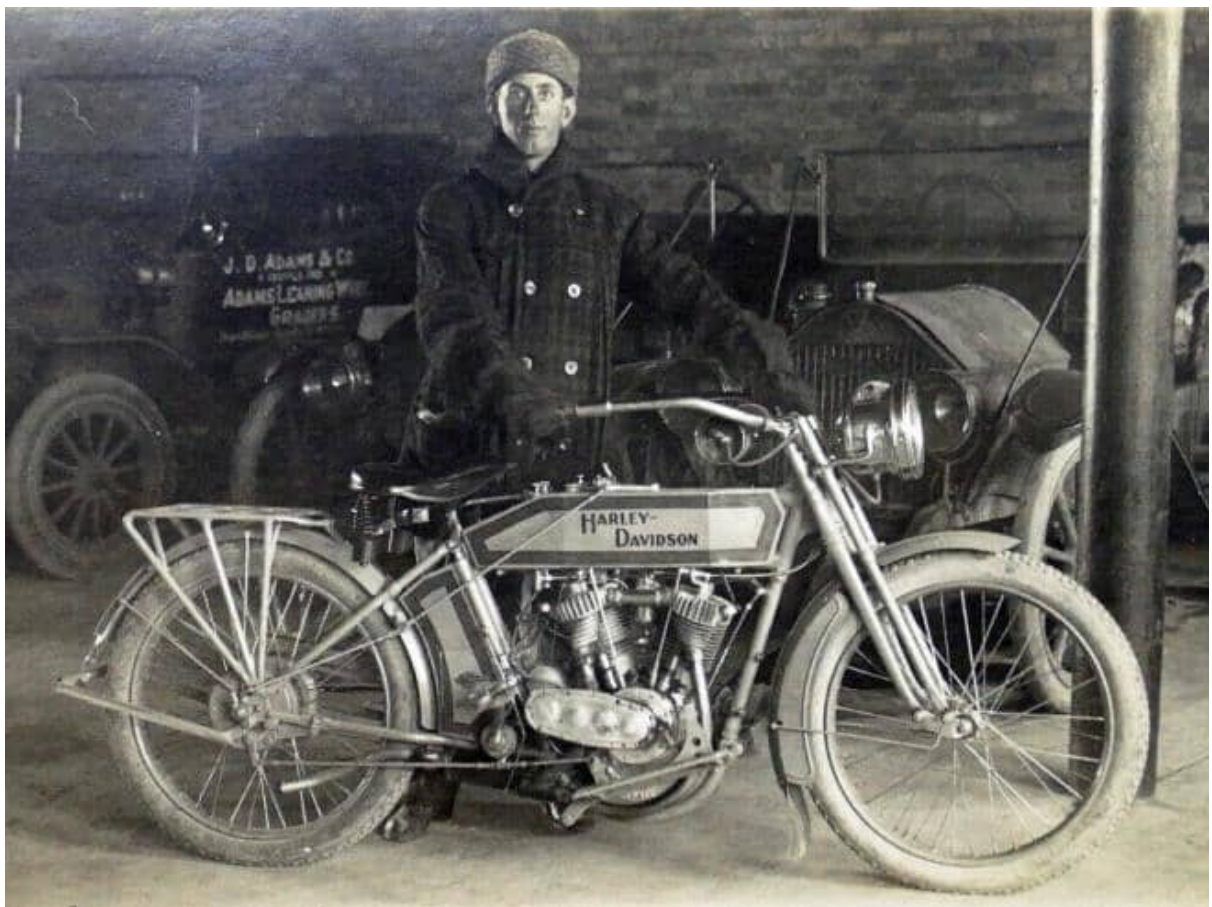
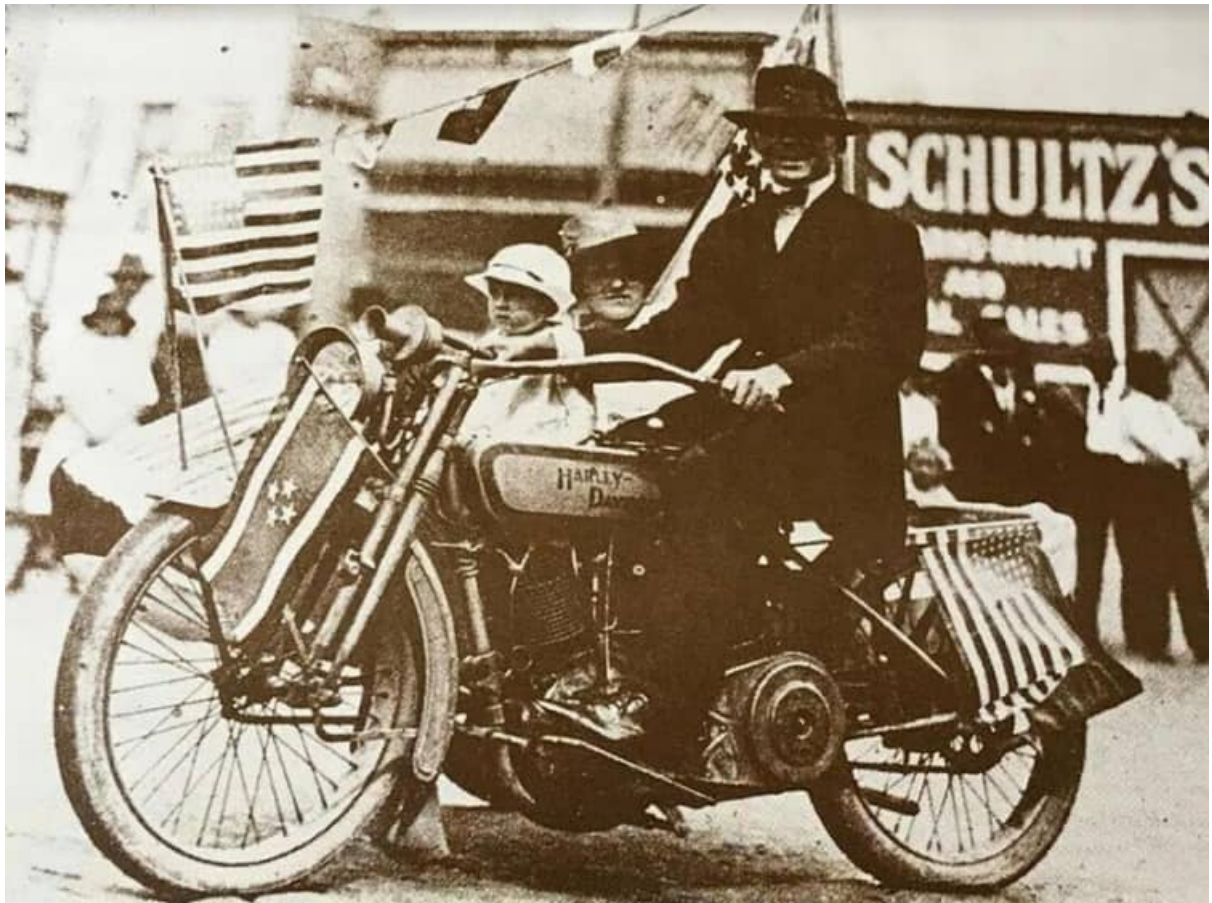




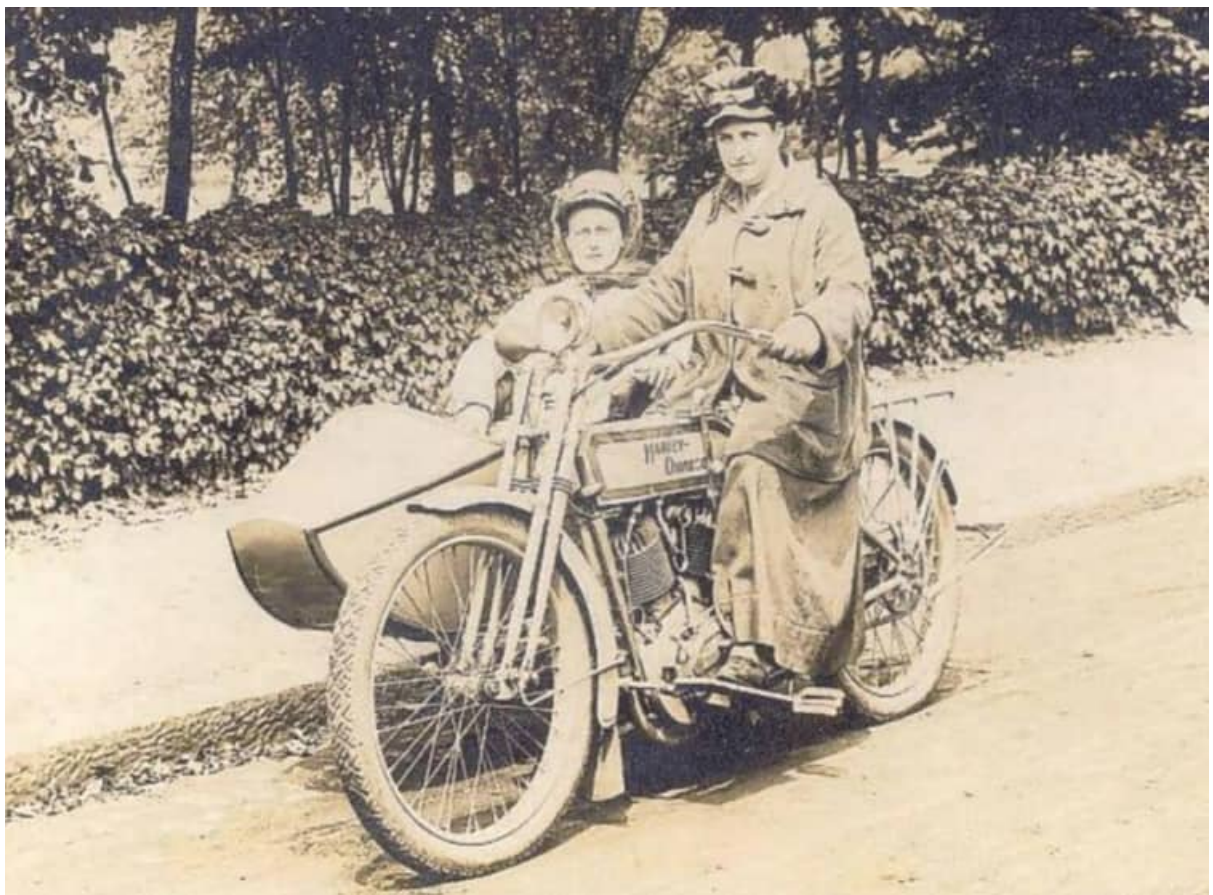








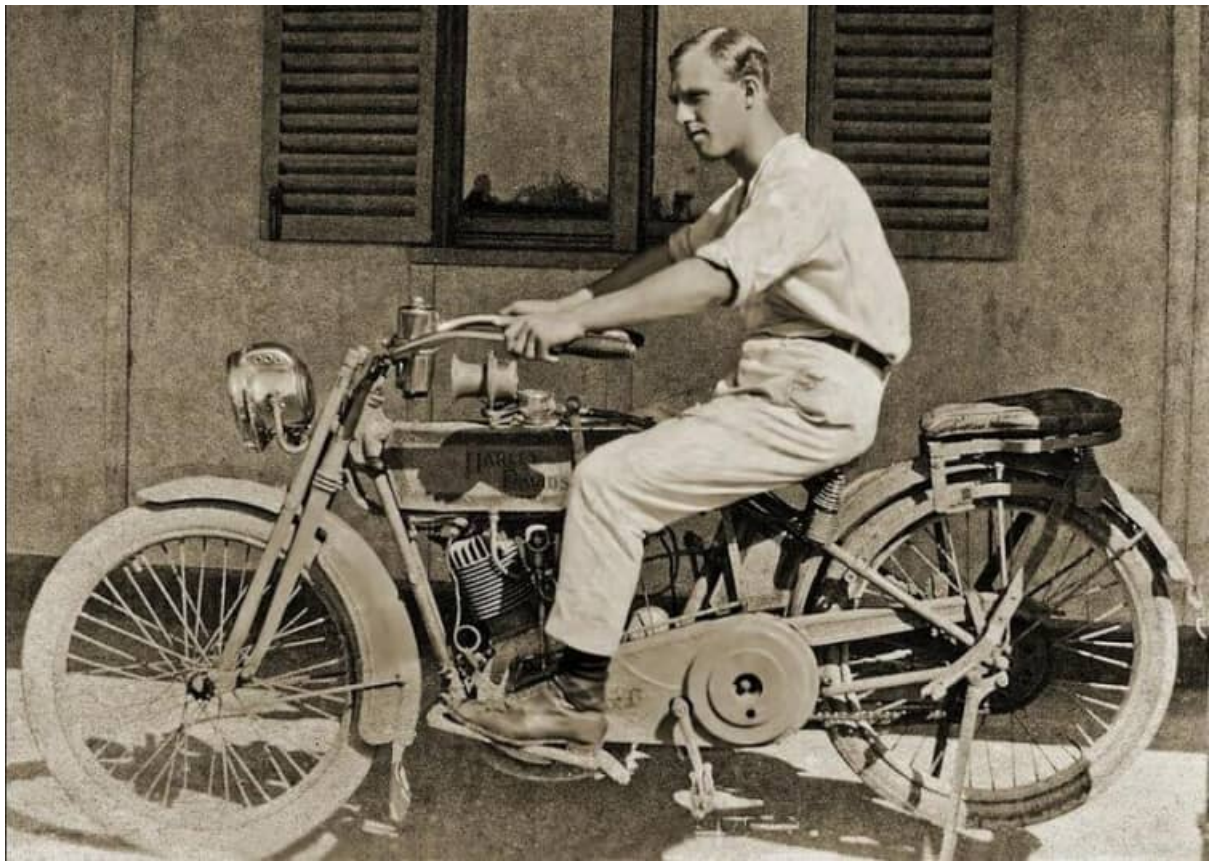








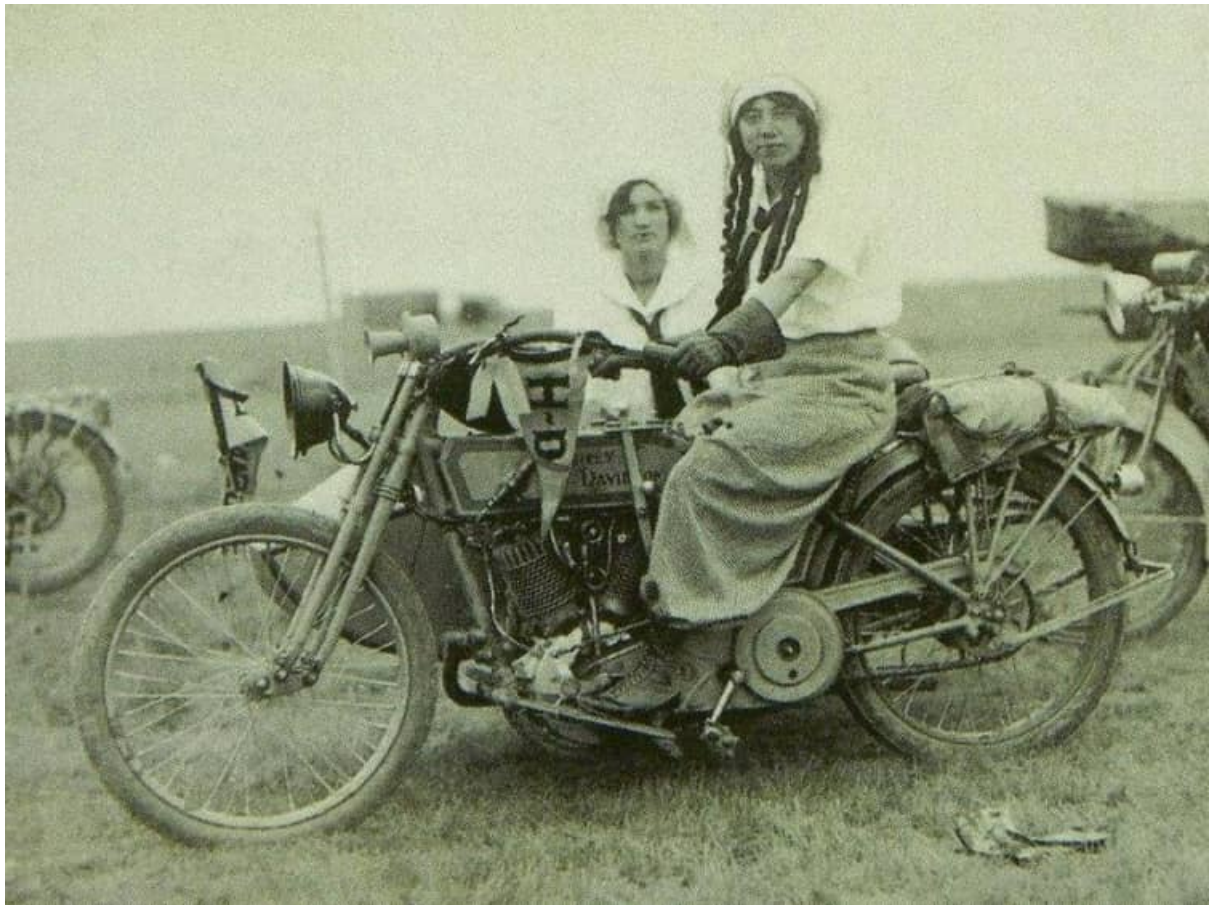
This snap was taken in Guatemala.





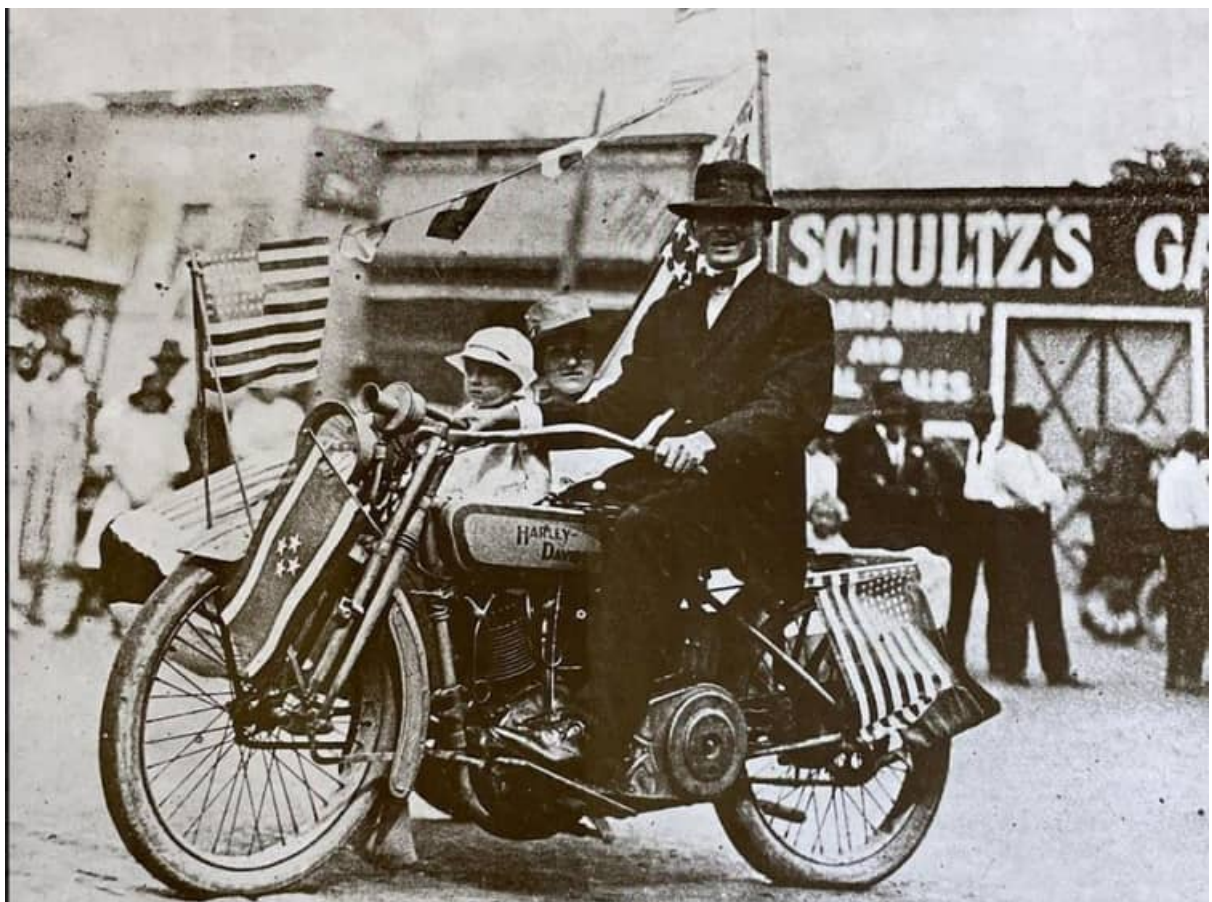


Calf rides hog...in 1912.





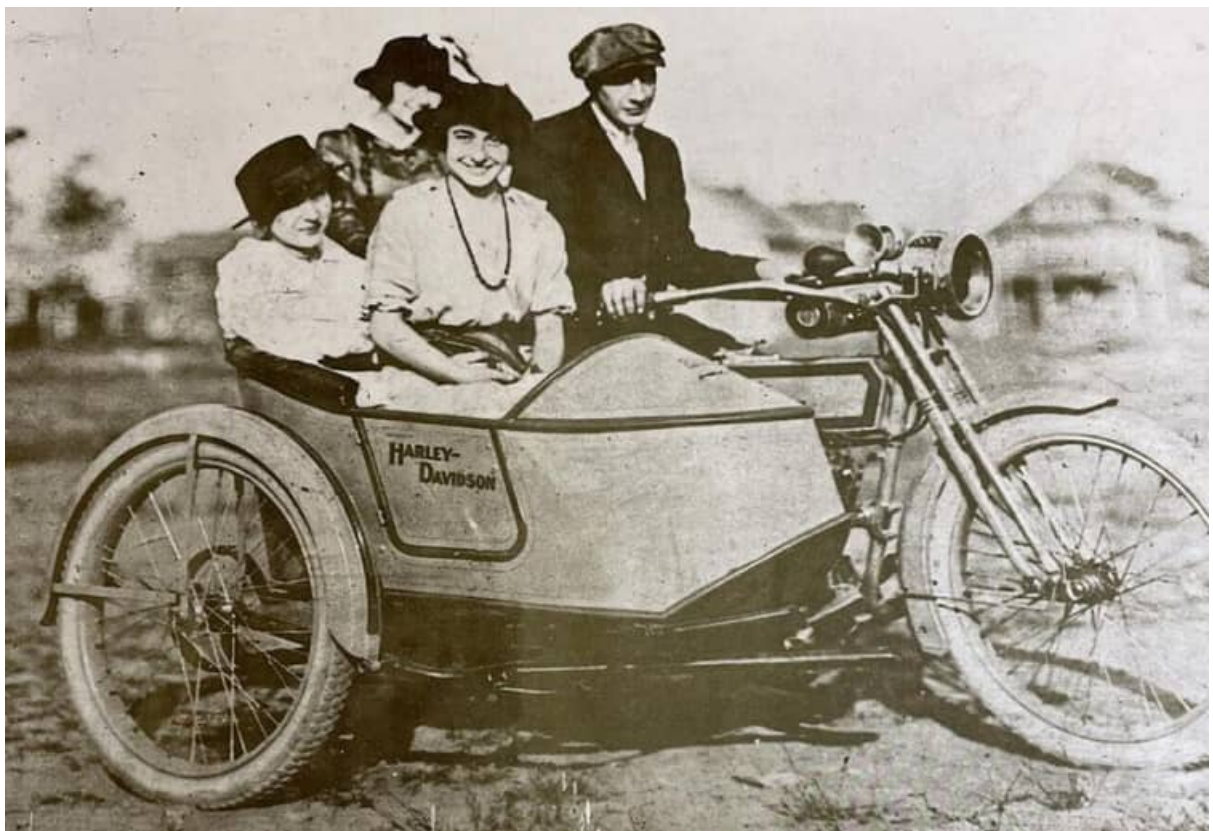
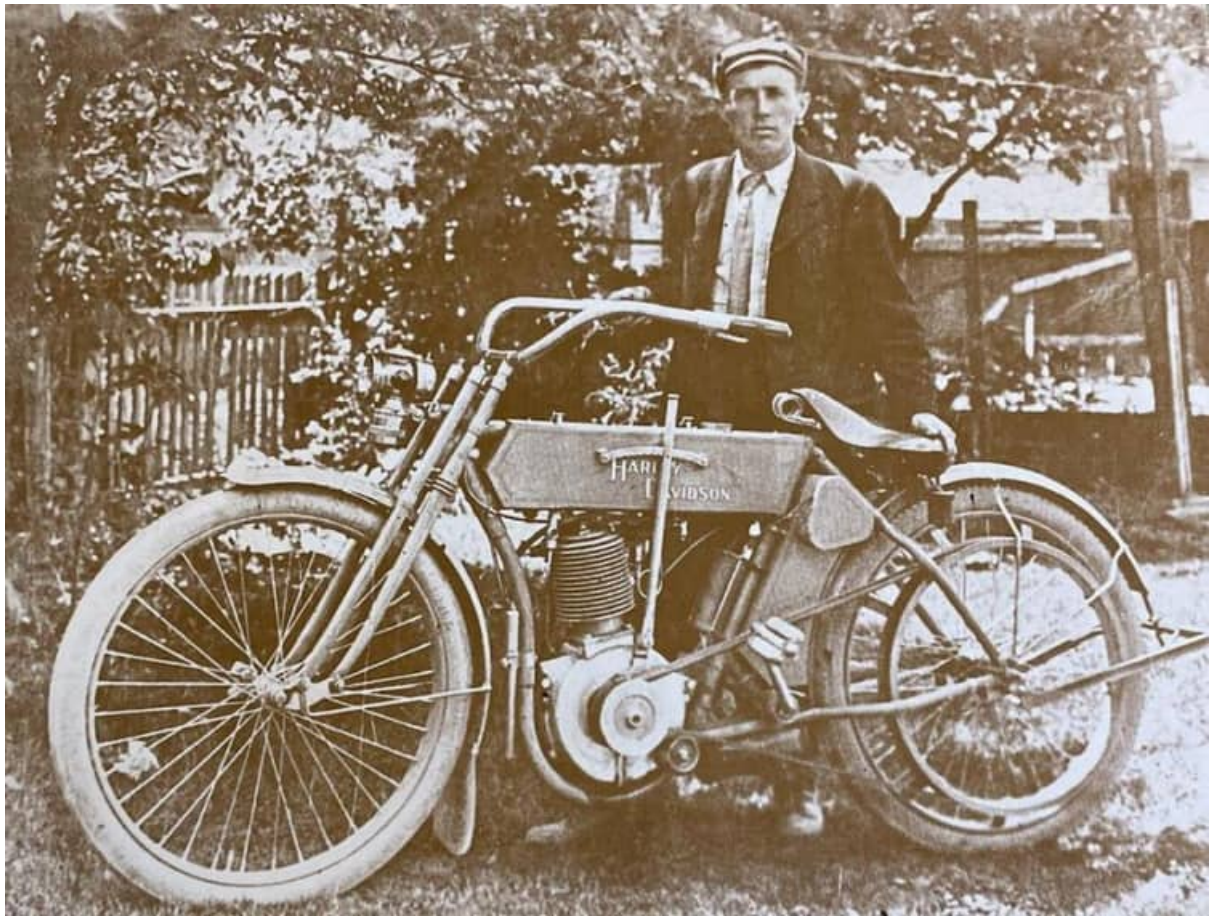




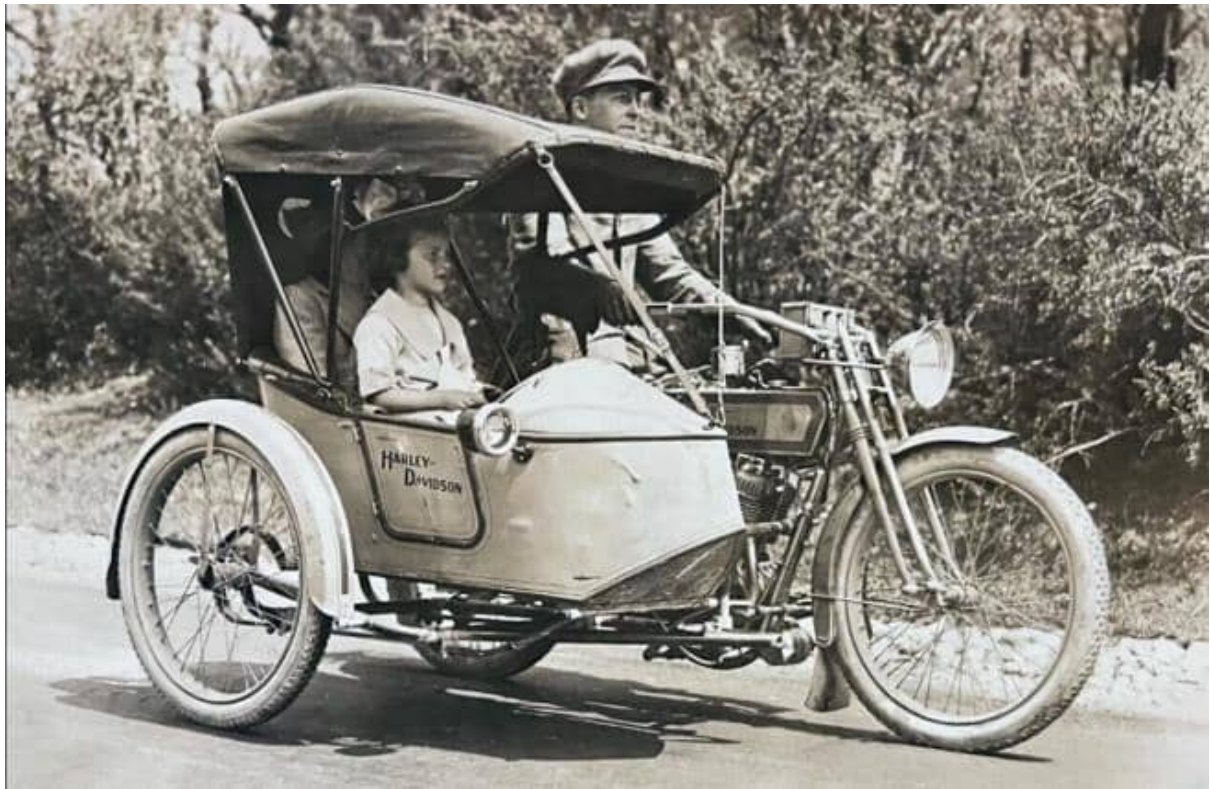








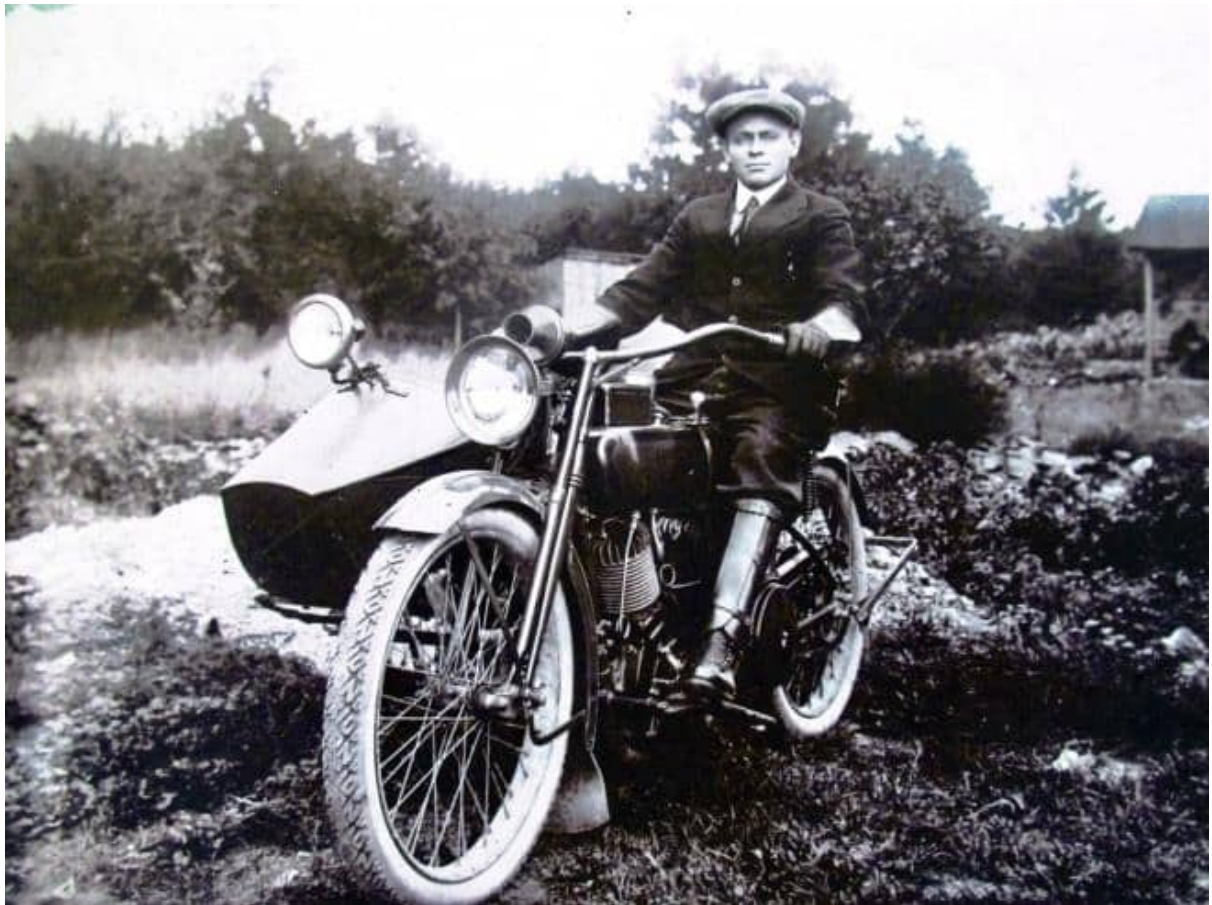




A rare shot of an Italian Harley dealer plying his trade.

































We're in Panama for this snap and the one below.

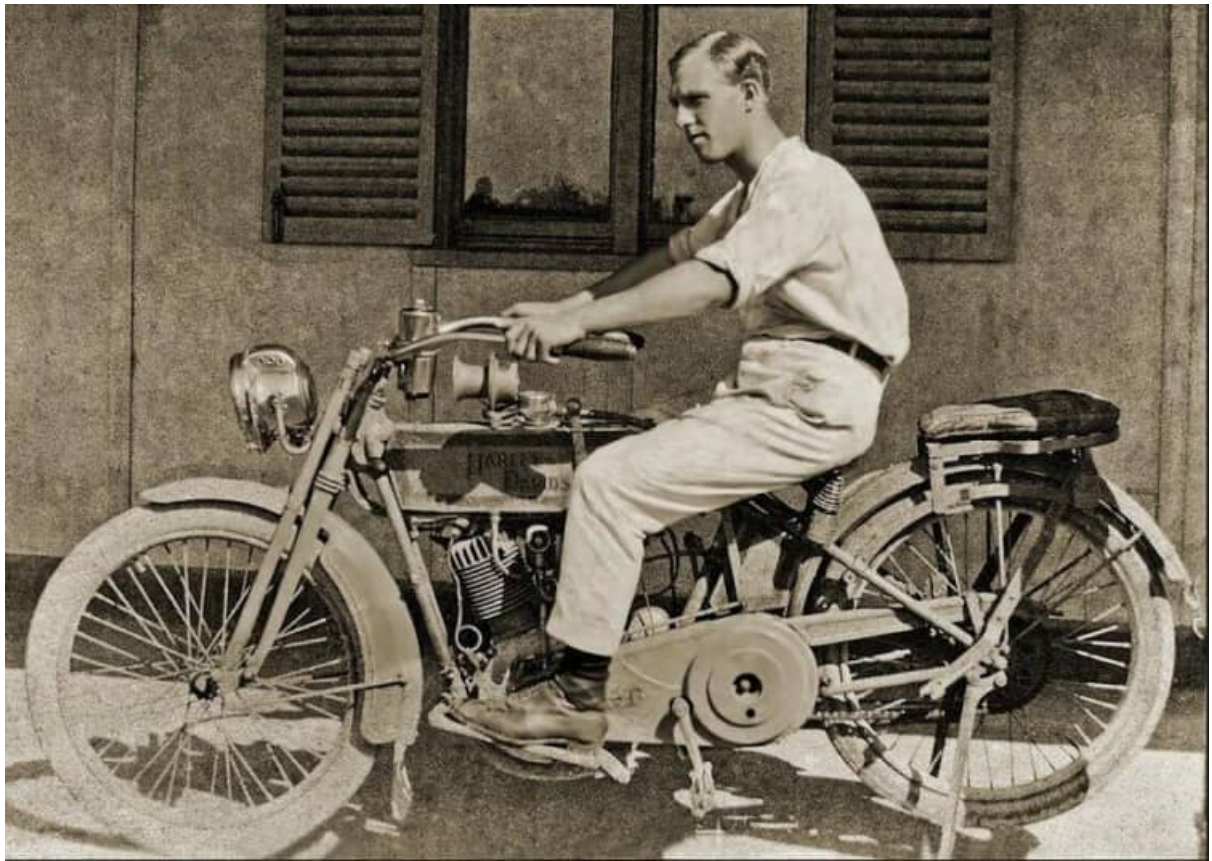




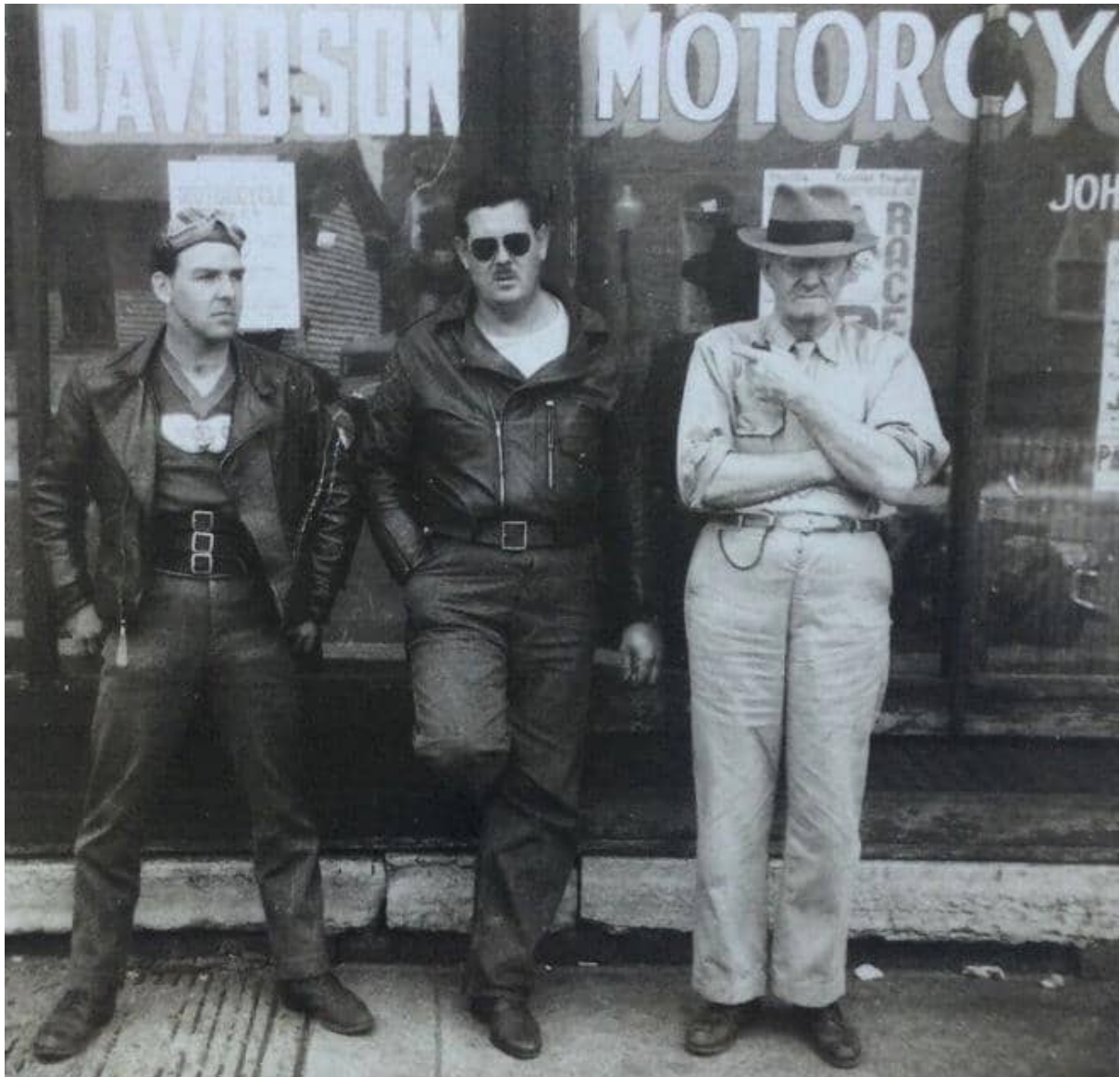












Harley customers, 1946.

*And in those days Indian and Harley-Davidson didn't have the Stateside market all to themselves...*

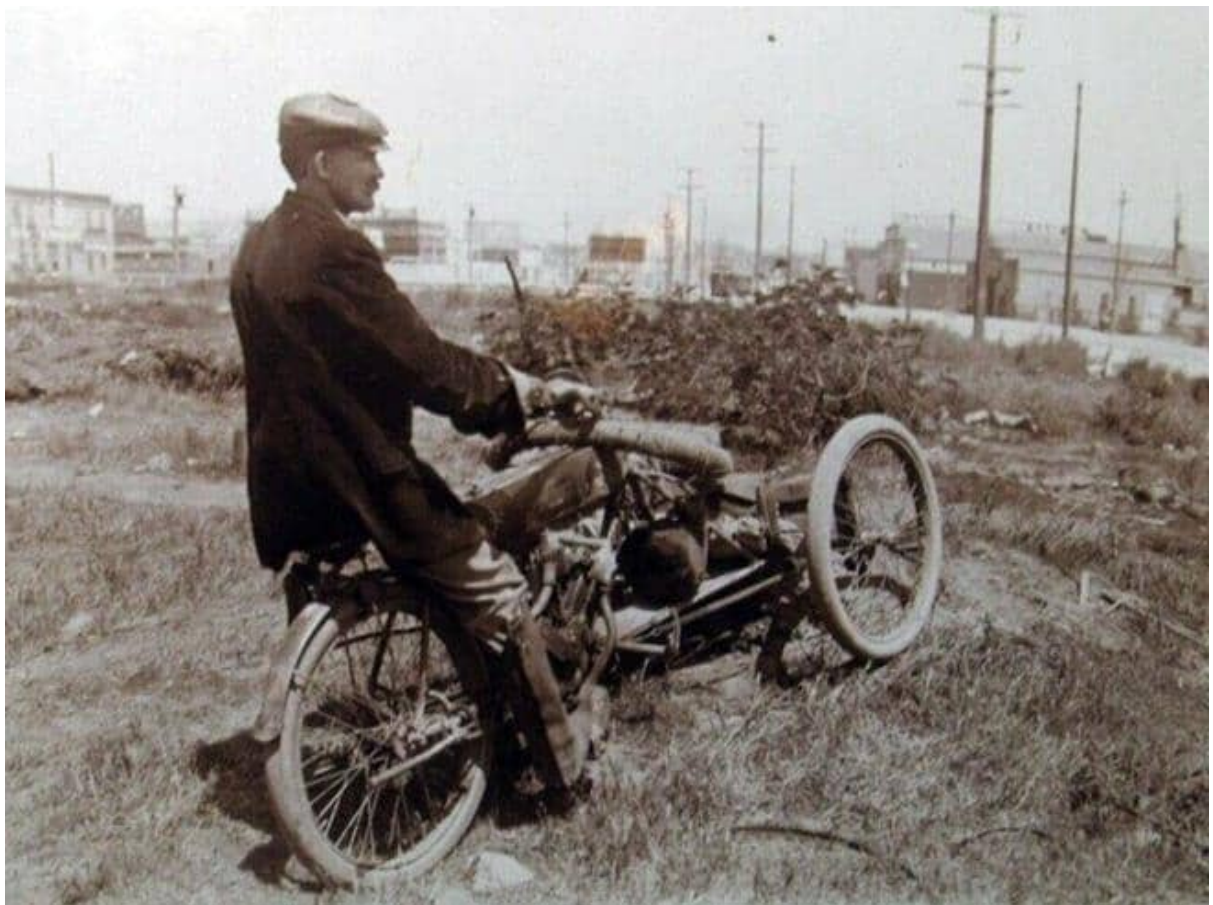
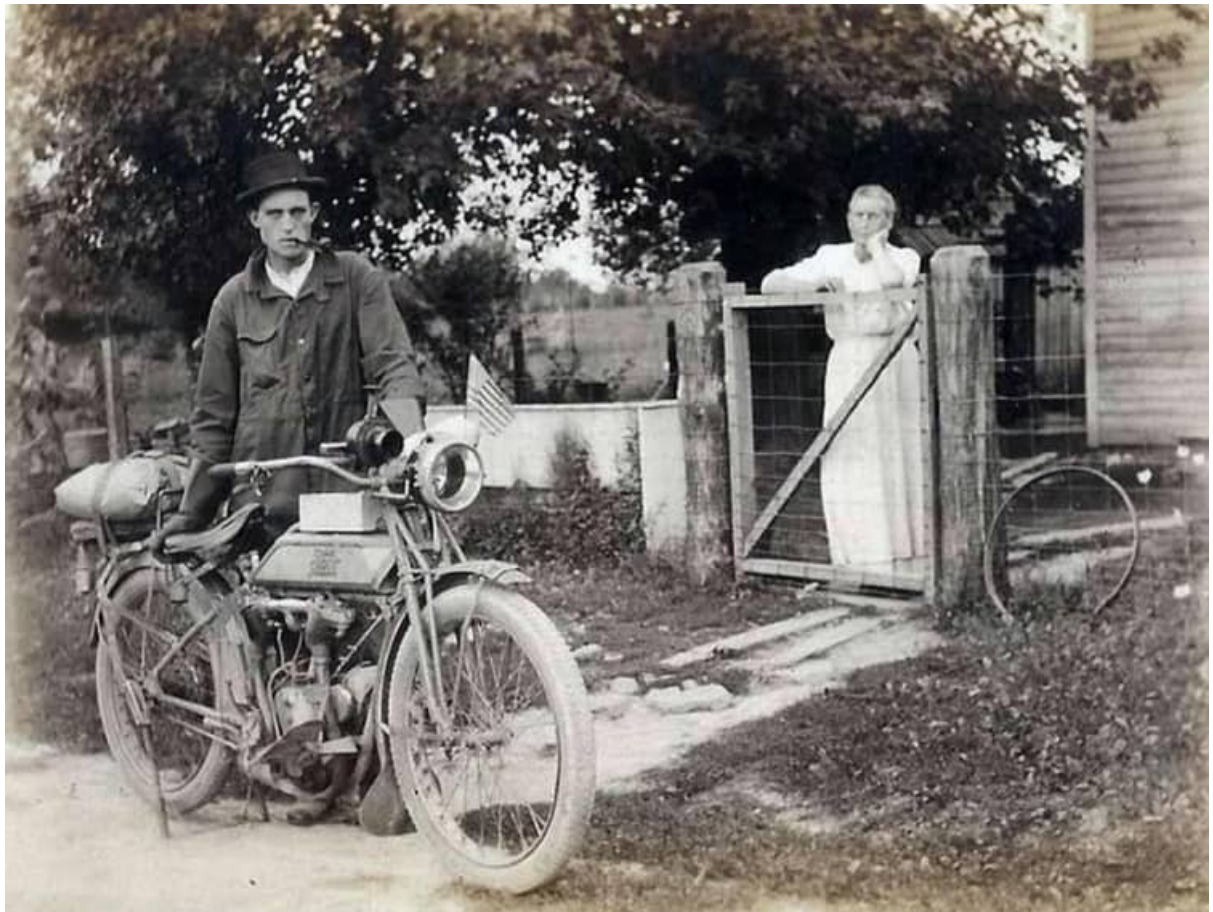
*Thor*

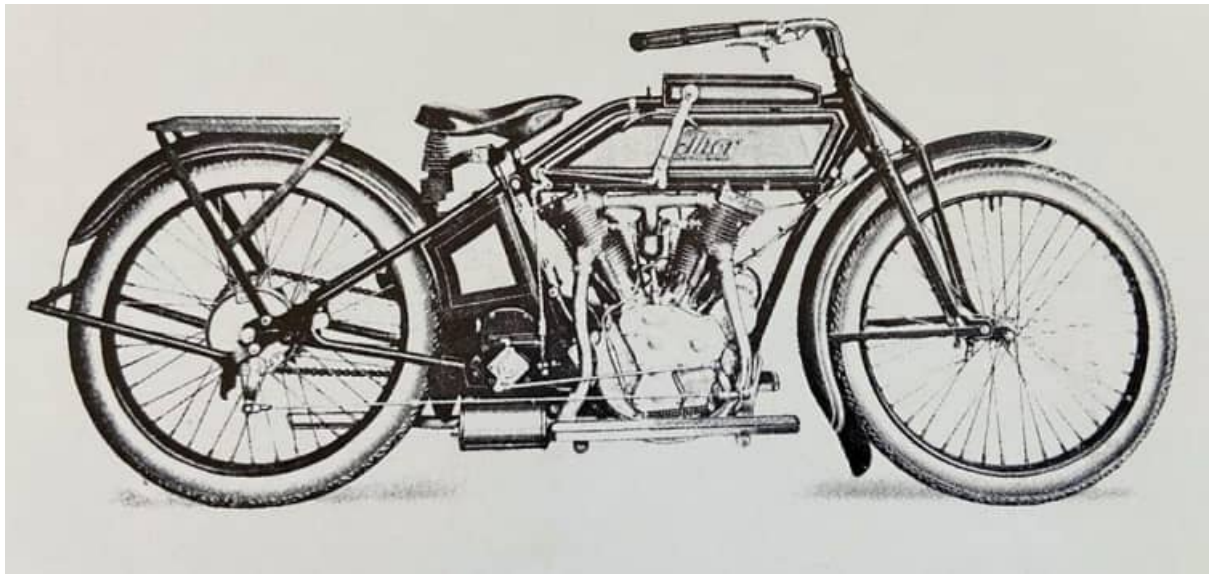


The Thor riders are clearly having a jolly time with the twin and the single; their Harley chum seems to be sulking.









This example is still on the road.



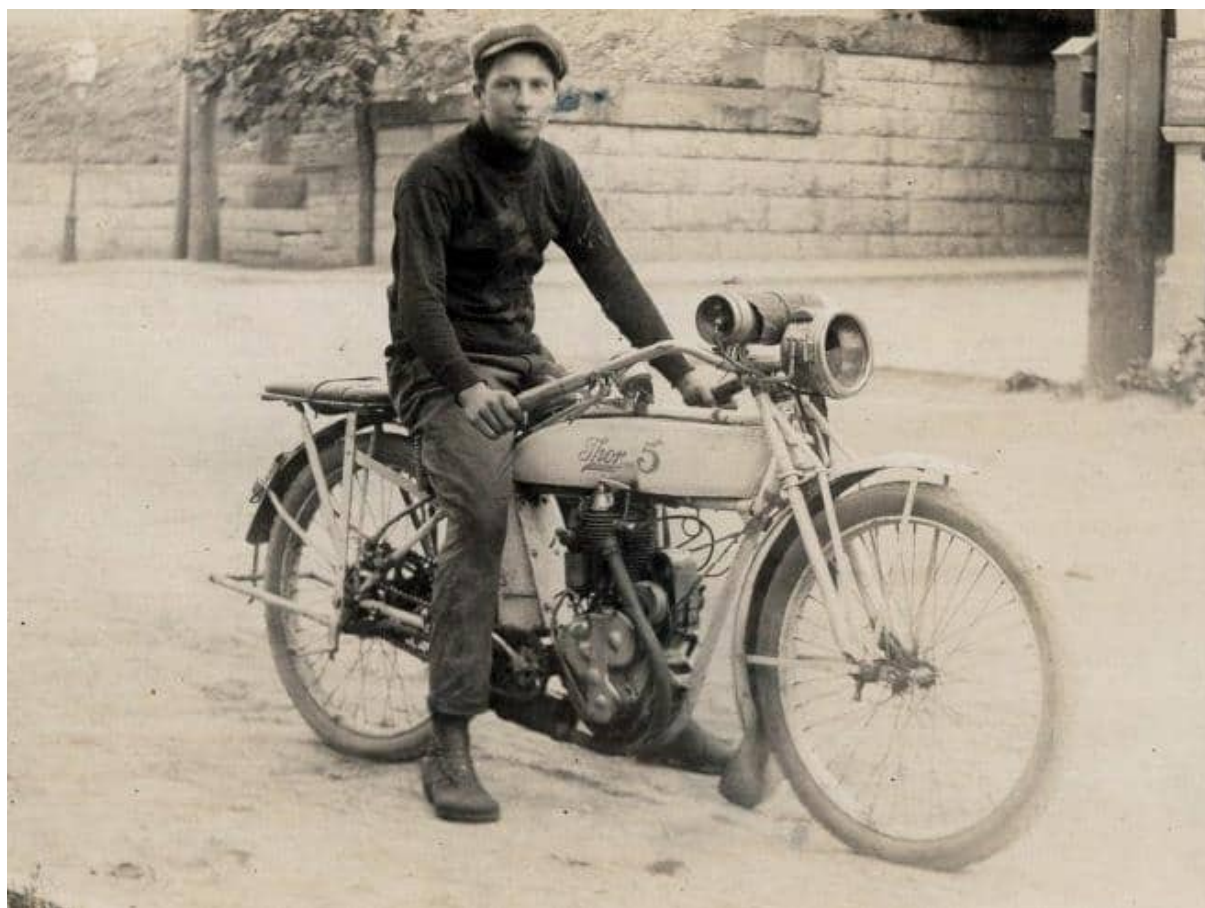


Ray Seymour, aboard his formidable V-twin Thor at the Agriculture Park dirt track in Los Angeles in 1908. Brakes were clearly considered unnecessary.



Officer James Crawford, pictured in 1915, patrolled the streets of Cleveland for 23 years; not on a Cleveland, but a Thor.





*Flying Merkel*



Ralph de Palma campaigned a Merkel on East Coast dirt tracks; this snapshot dates from 1910.





This snap

also dates from 1910 (and no-one should look that cool, dammit)...



...as does this one.



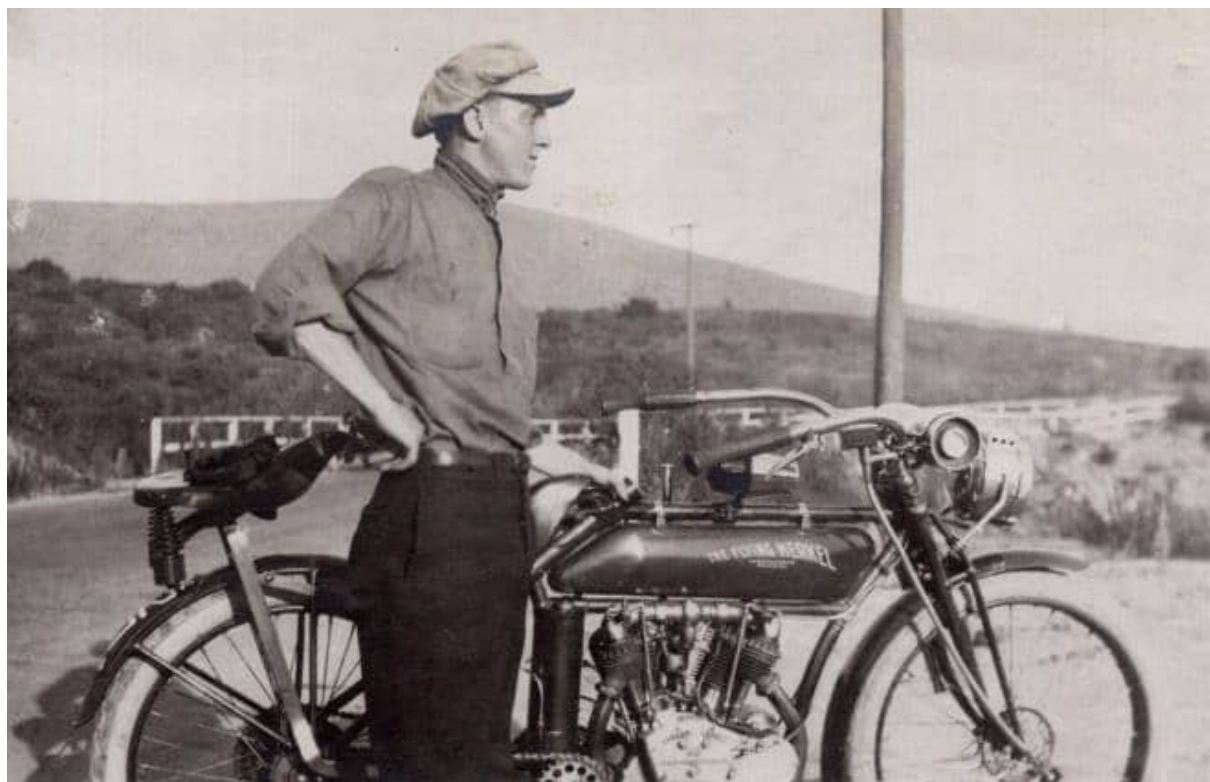
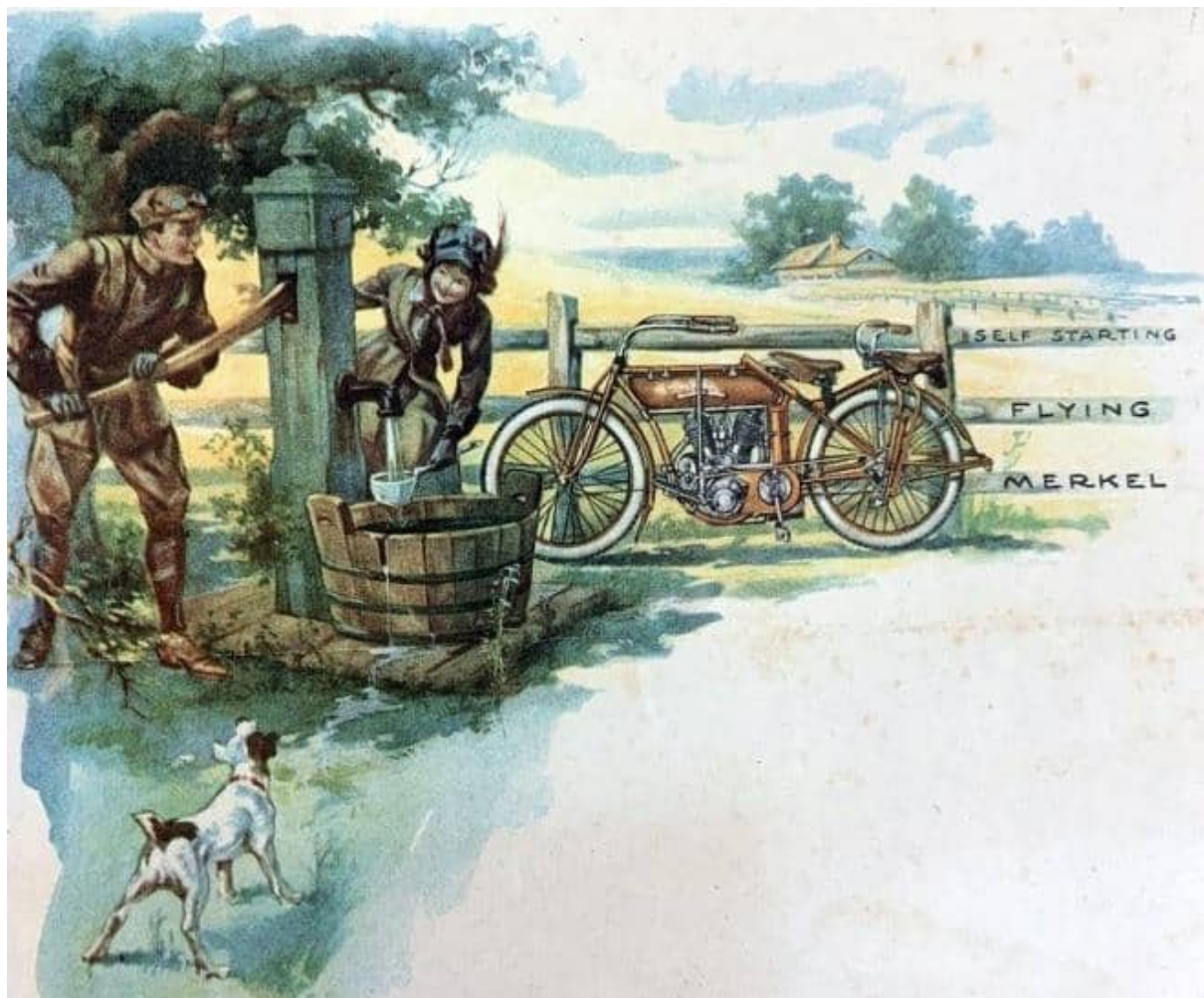


Flying Merkels made their name on the motordromes but there were plenty of them on the road too...









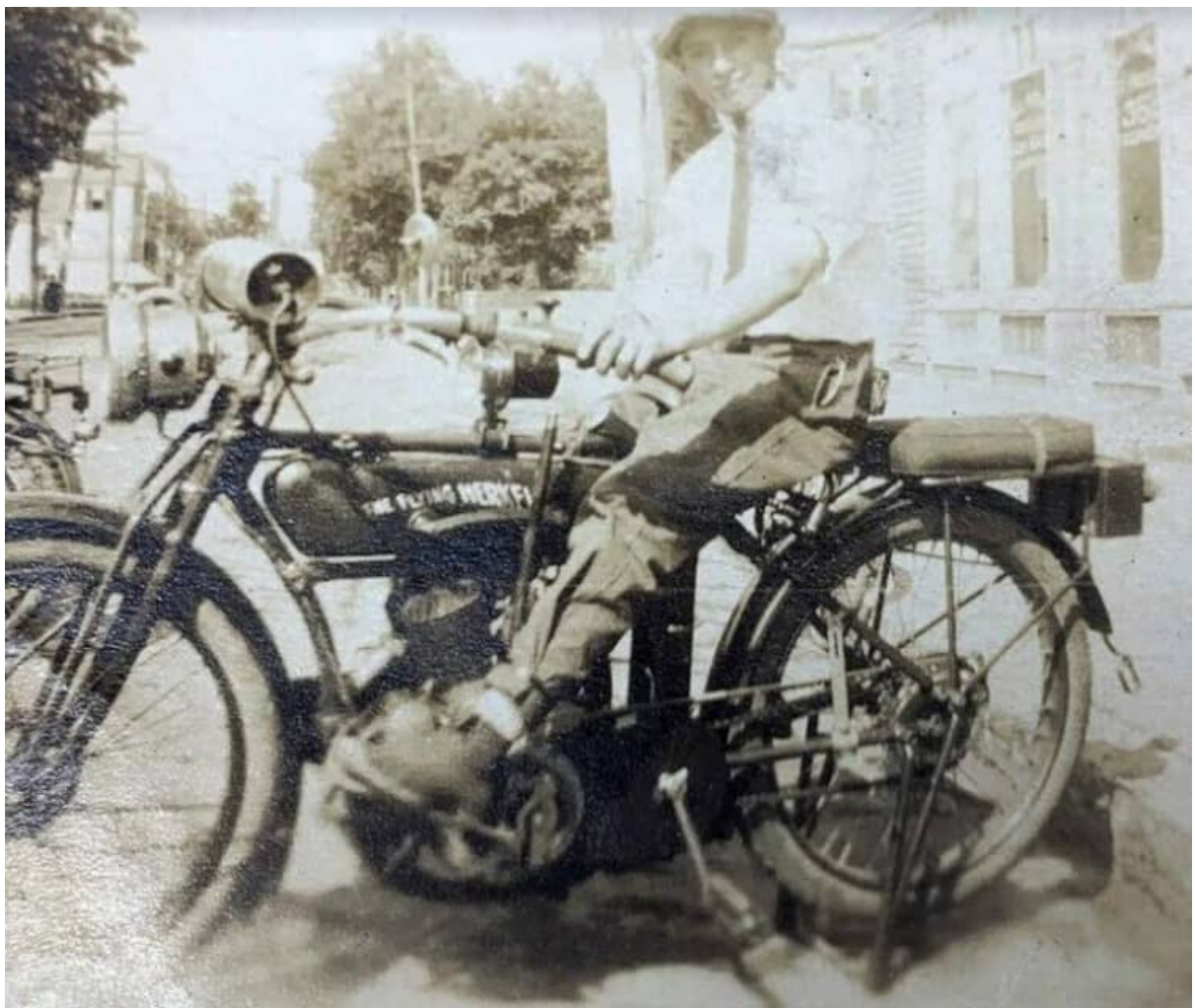
# THE FLYING MERKEL

The Only Motorcycle in the World  
With A Self-starter & Two-Speed Gear



*J.P. Schantz Crossing  
the Great American  
Desert on his Flying  
Merkel Motorcycle*







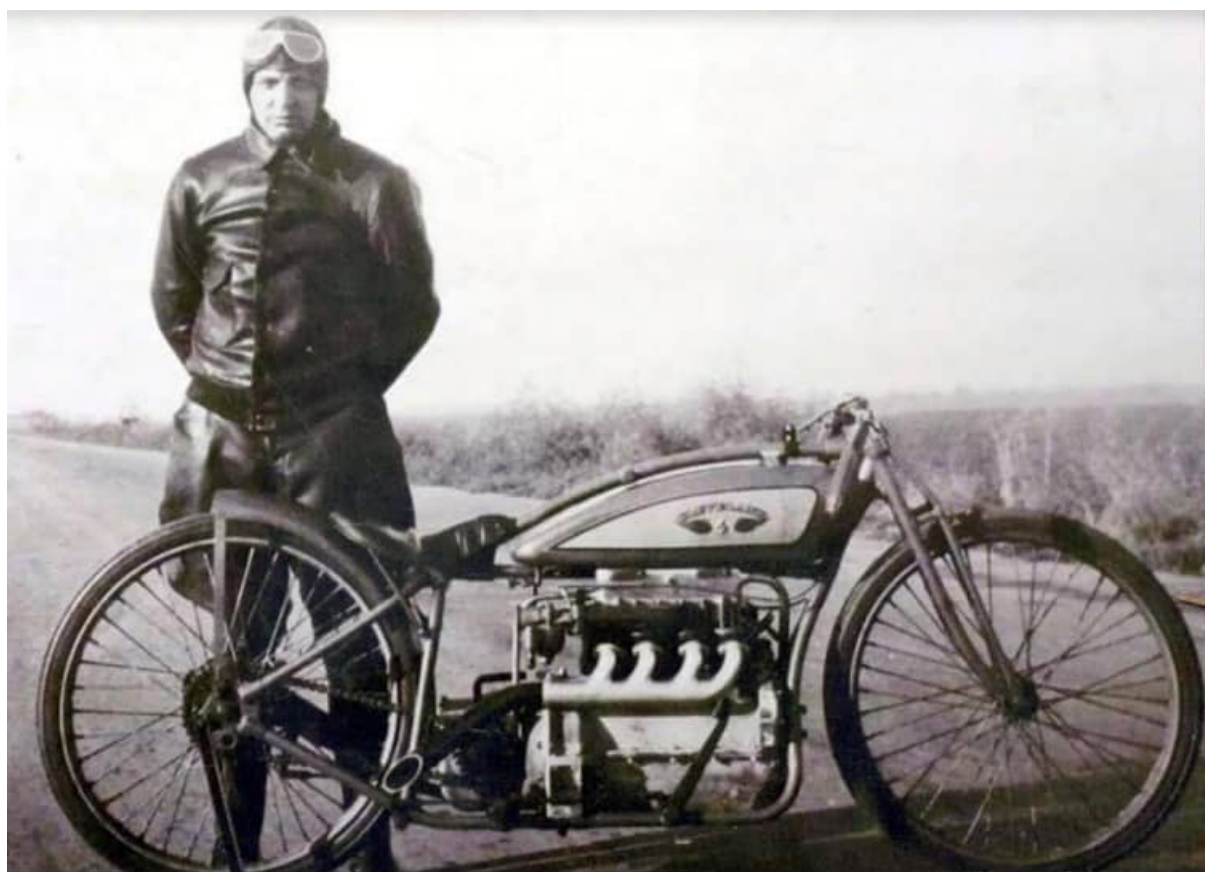
Maldwyn Jones was a Merkel factory rider and engine tuner—he beat US champion Erwin G ‘Cannonball’ Baker in a 10-mile race.



When the Miami Cycle and Manufacturing Co ceased production of Merkel motorcycles in 1915, Joseph Merkel designed and patented the ohv ‘Merkel Motor Wheel’. The Hendee Manufacturing Co, makers of Indian motorcycles, bought the rights to the MMW in 1918; about 2,000 were made. This survivor is fitted to an Indian bicycle.

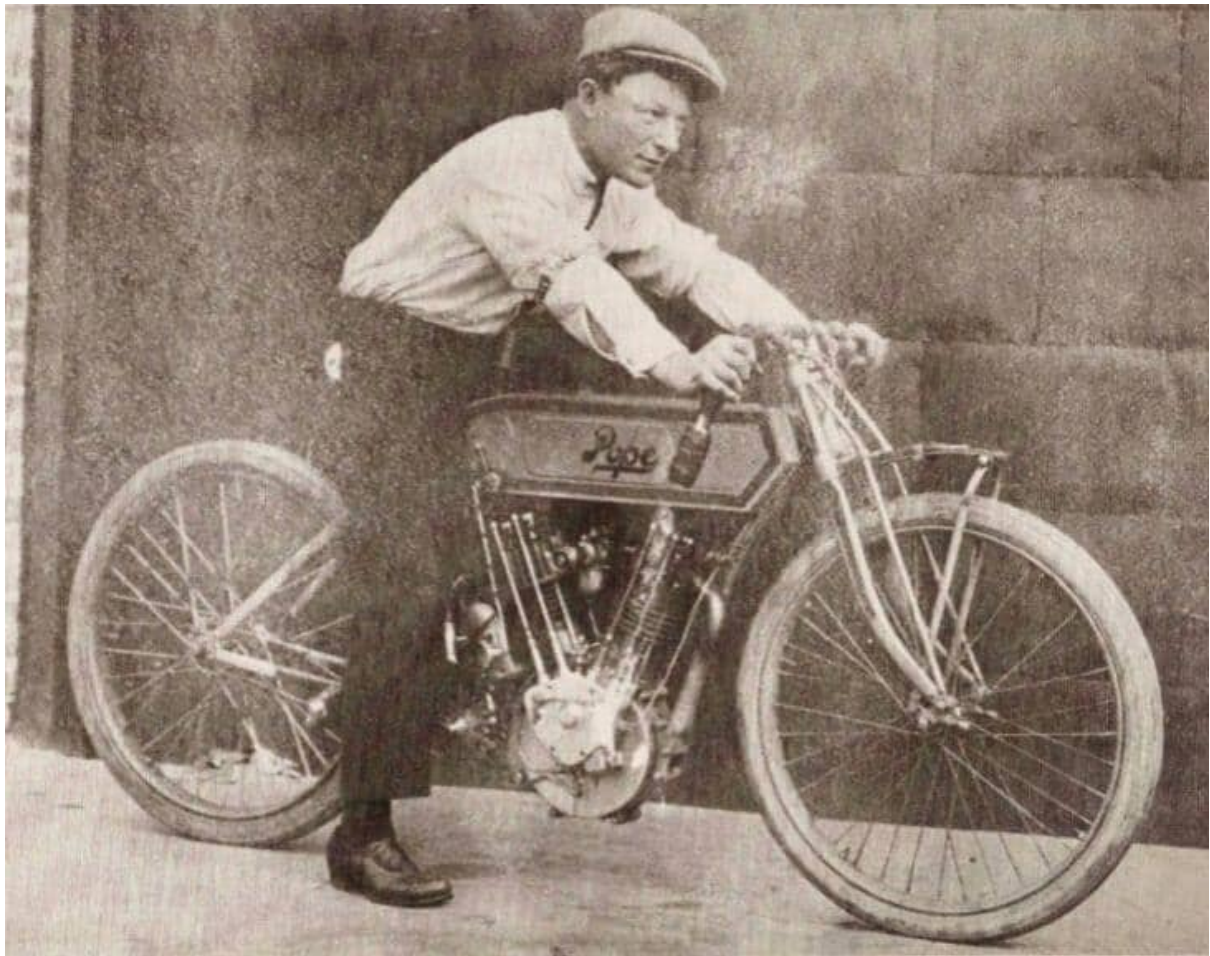




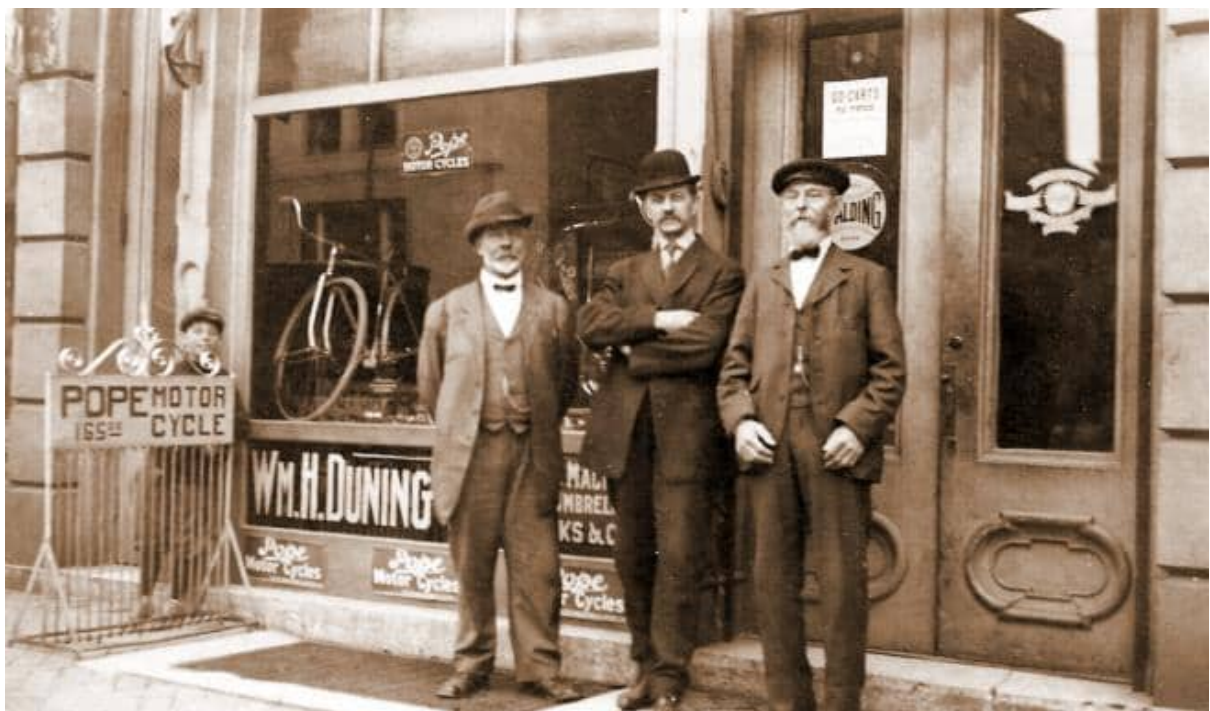


*Pope*

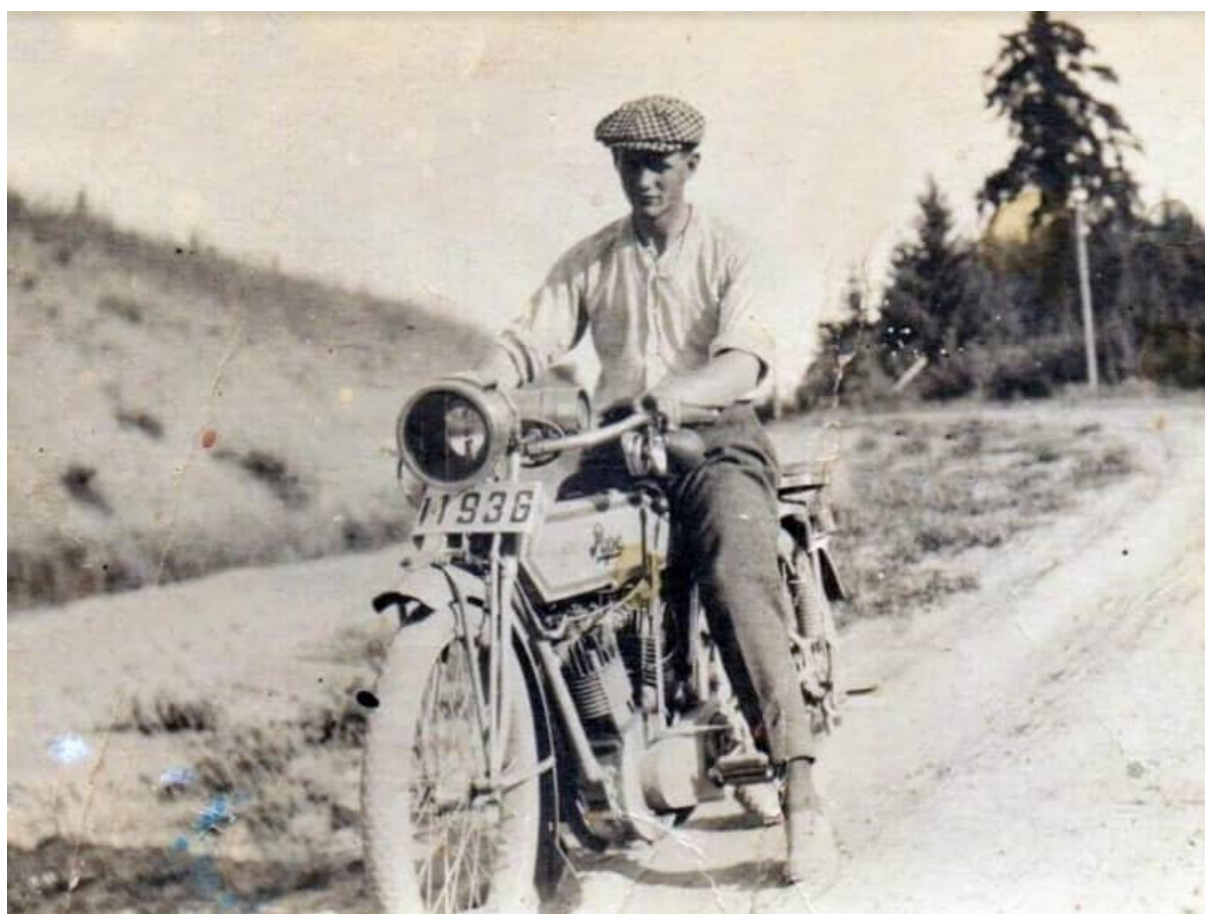




The Pope cycle (later motor cycle) company was established by Civil War veteran Colonel Pope; his son Albert was the main man behind the motor cycle business.

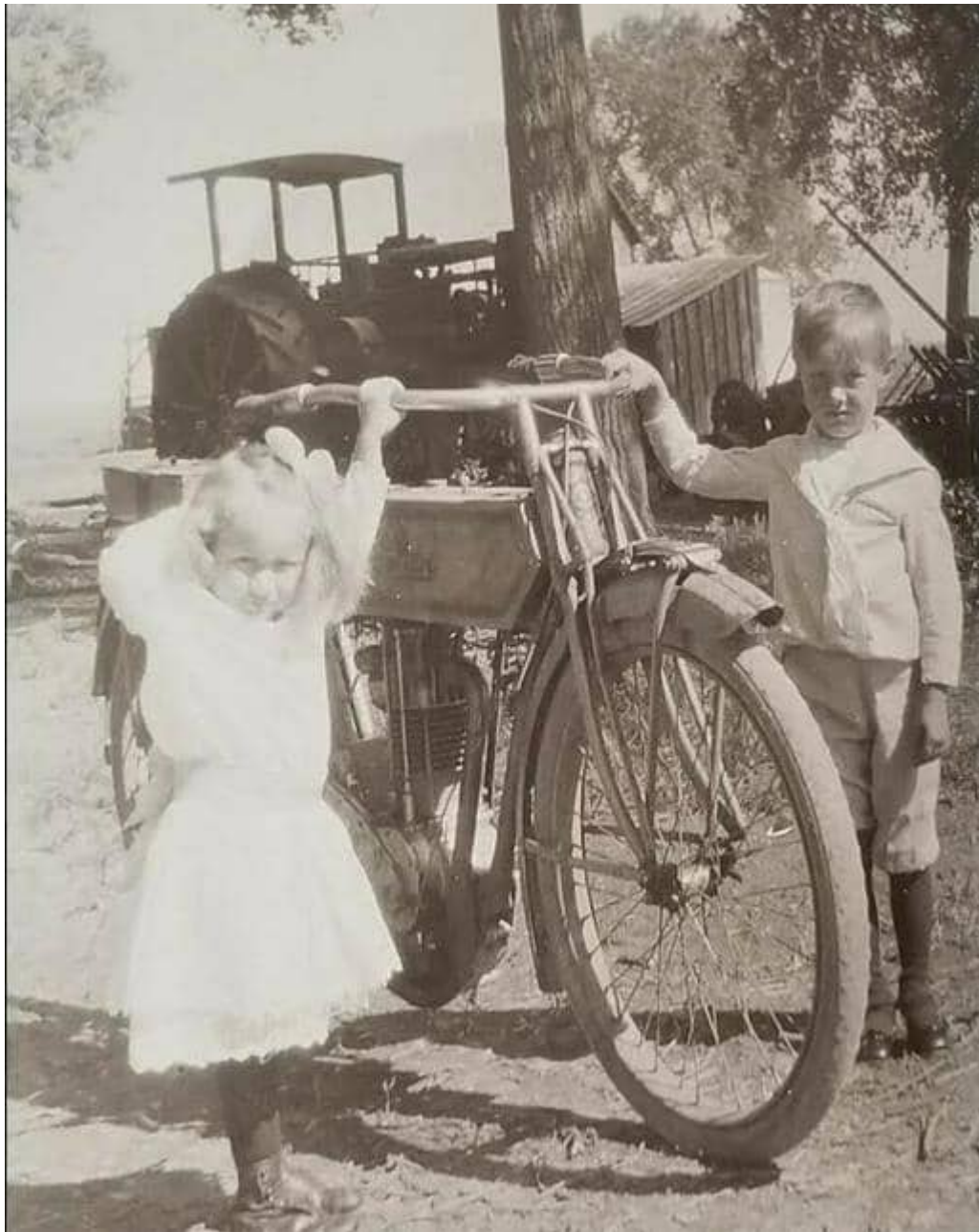






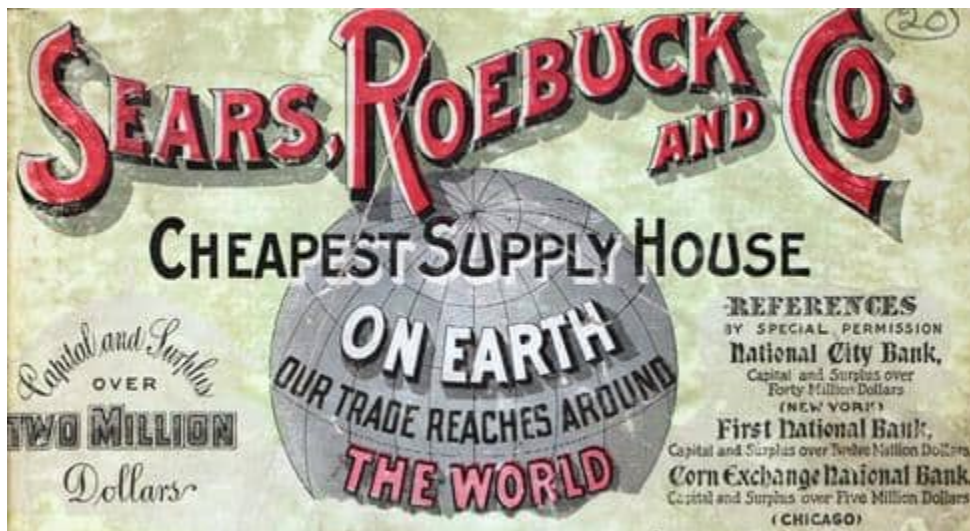
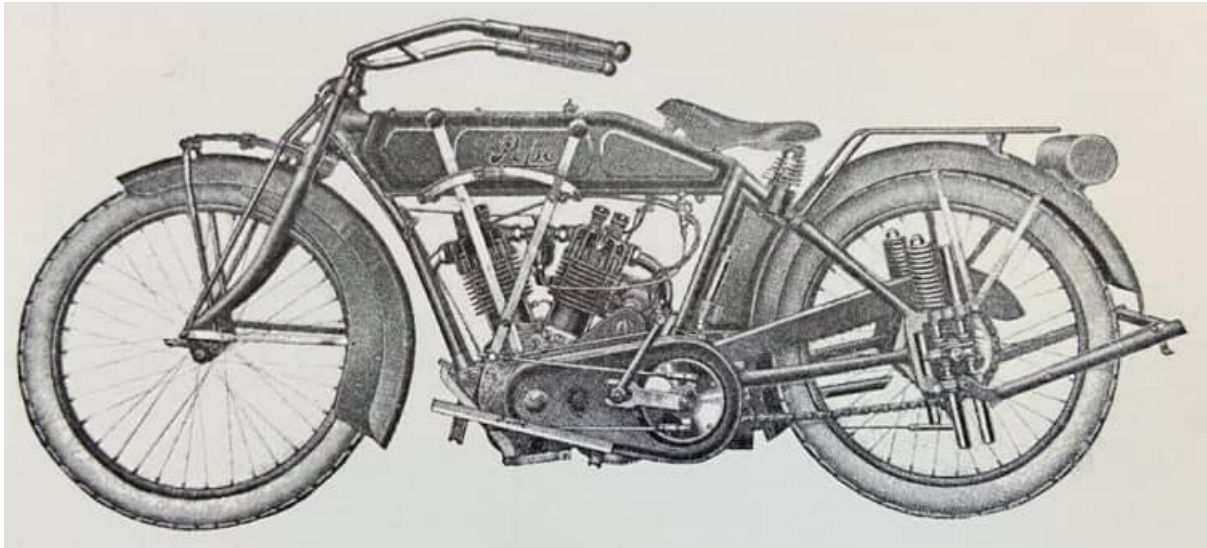












From the mid-

1890s until 1993, Sears and Roebuck Co produced a mail order catalogue offering anything from clothes to fire arms to the plans and materials to build a house. And from 1910 until the US belatedly entered the Great War the range included rebadged Thien and Thor motor cycles.



Here Are the "Big Guns" of Our Motorcycle Line—Wonders for Power and Speed



No. 19A214 1/4	Latest 1913 Sears De Luxe Invincible Twin:	7-Horse Power, Chain Drive, Bosch Magneto, Free Engine and Changeable Gear Clutch, 2 3/4-Inch Studded Tires, complete, as illustrated and described.	Price .....	\$235.00
No. 19A216 1/4	Latest 1913 Special De Luxe Dreadnaught Twin:	9-Horse Power, Chain Drive, Bosch Magneto, Free Engine and Changeable Gear Clutch, 2 3/4-Inch Studded Tires, complete, as illustrated and described.	Price .....	250.00

Page Sixteen 2

Sears, Roebuck and Co., Chicago.












# Yale Motorcycles



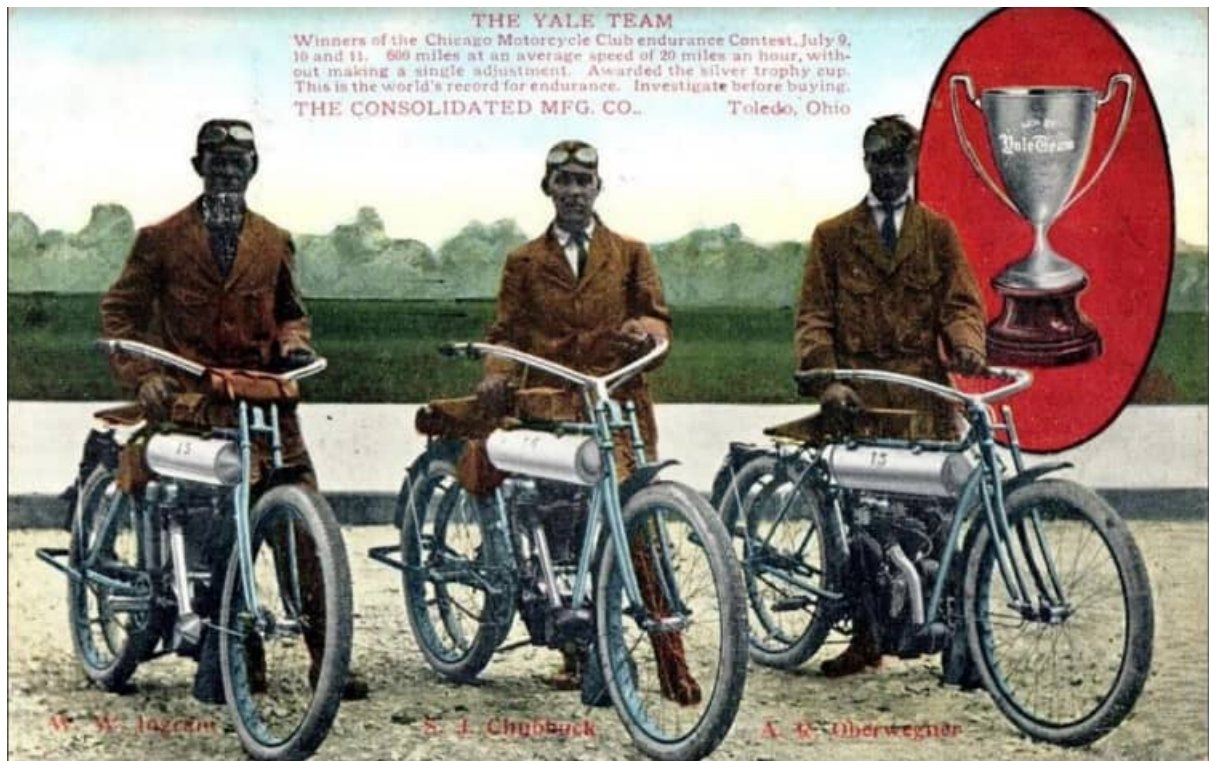
With two-speed transmission

H. J. FRIES.

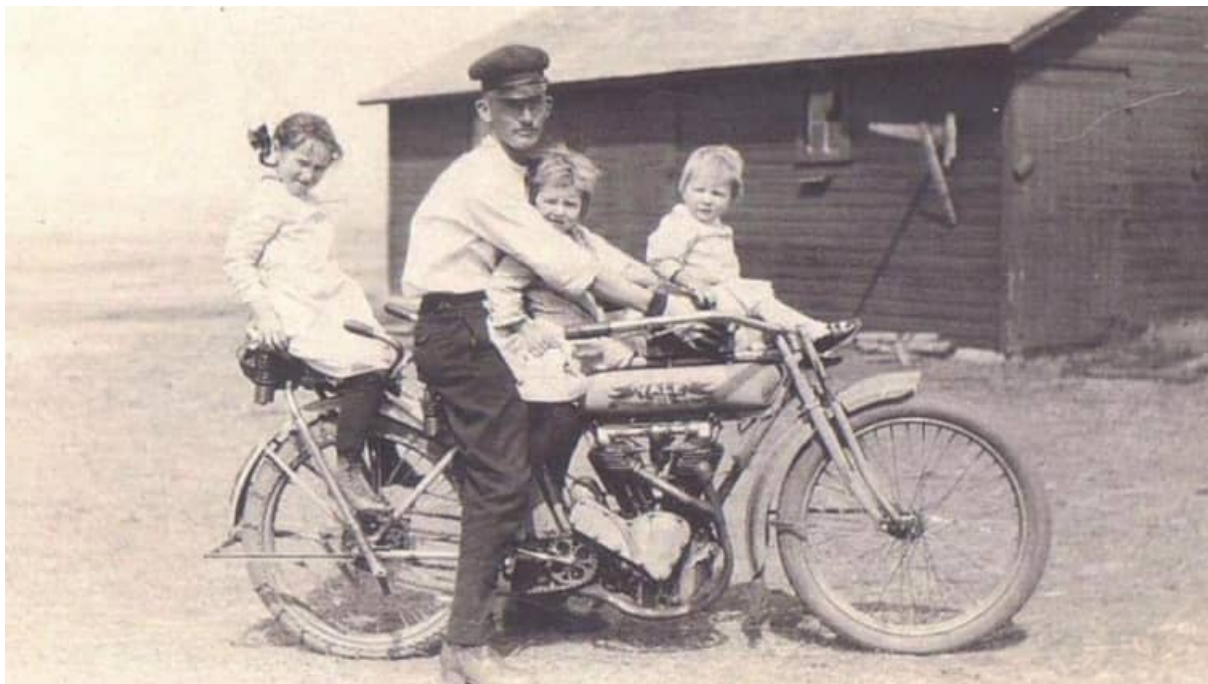
1322 CHEW STREET

ALLENTOWN, PA., \_\_\_\_\_ 191 \_\_\_\_\_



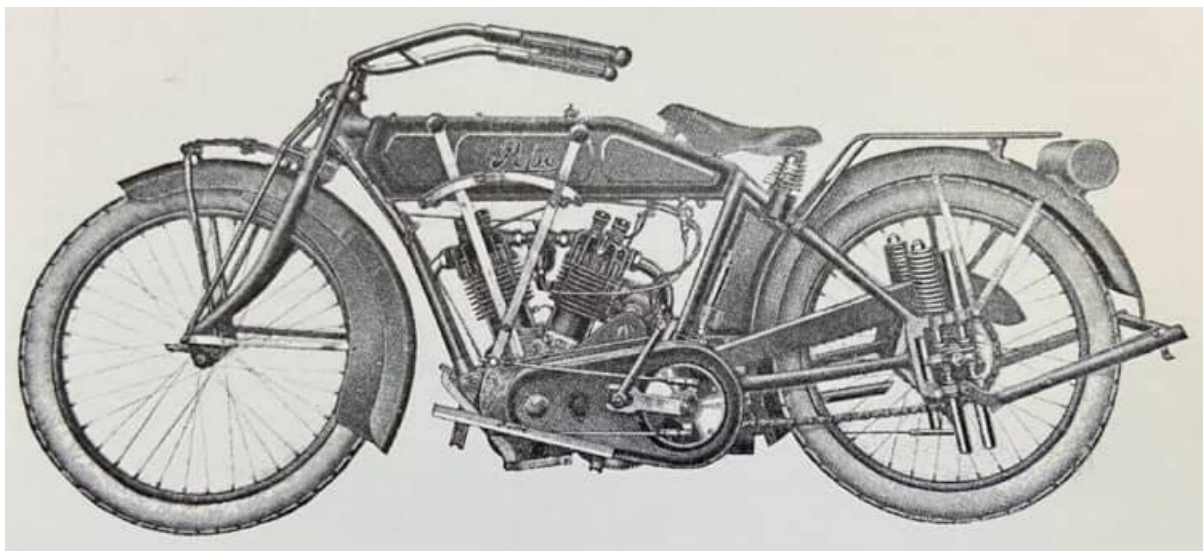


Even today, averaging 20mph over a 600-mile run demands a little effort; in 1909 on dirt roads this team of Yale riders from the Chicago MCC earned their trophy.











Excelsior works rider (and team-mate to Jake de Rosier) Charles 'Fearless' Balke pictured at William A Langley's Excelsior dealership in Sacramento in 1911. Balke had ridden for Indian as a team-mate of Jake de Rosier; when they were both fired Excelsior snapped them up.





This Excelsior is piloted by Roy o'Hare, pictured in 1912.



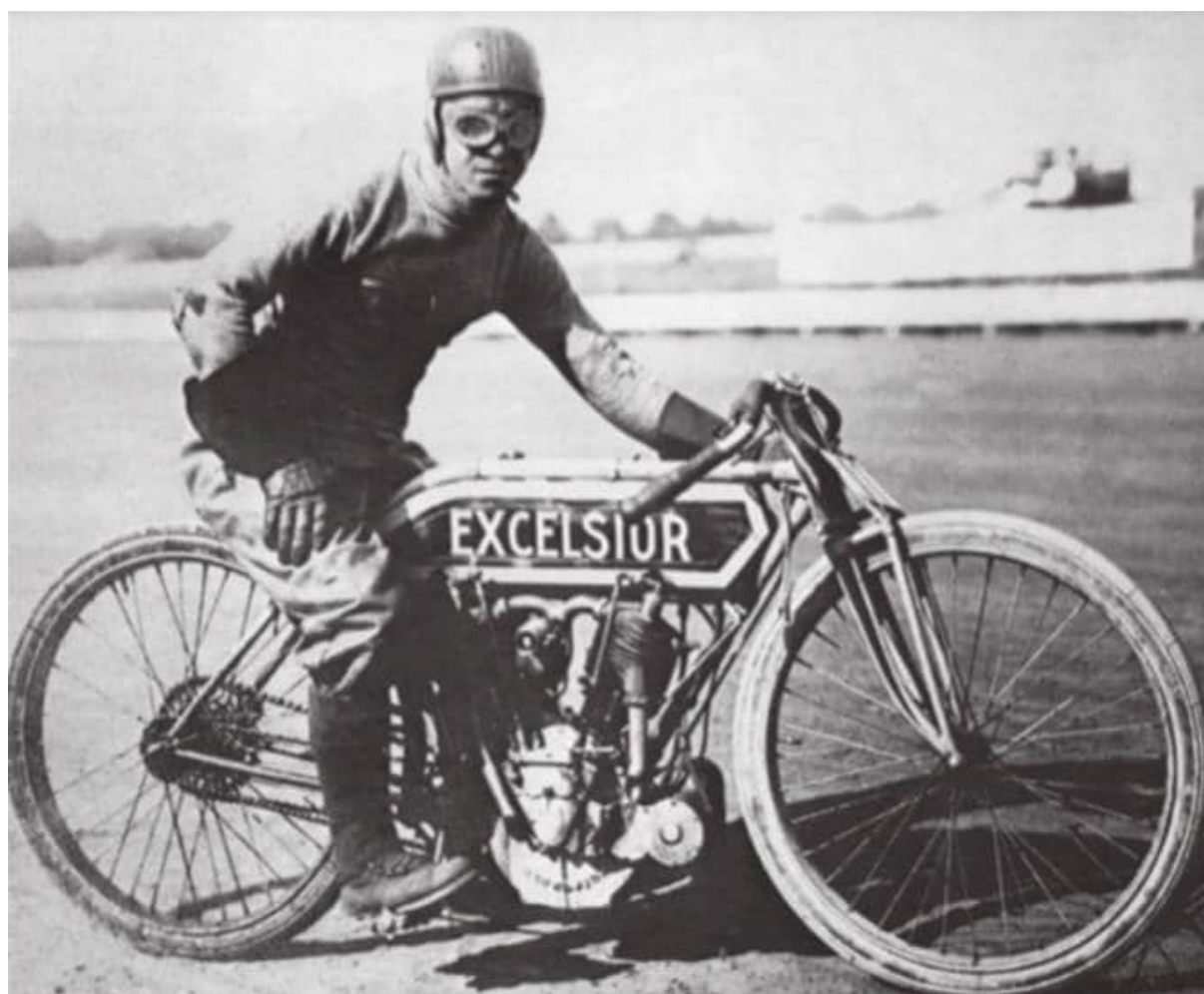


Well Bennett spent a season as captain of the Detroit Motordrome's 'Tiger Squad'; in 1919 he set a trans-continental on an Excelsior, covering 1,714 miles from Canada to Mexico in 53hr 28min...





...these pics were taken at the Denver Motordrome in 1912.



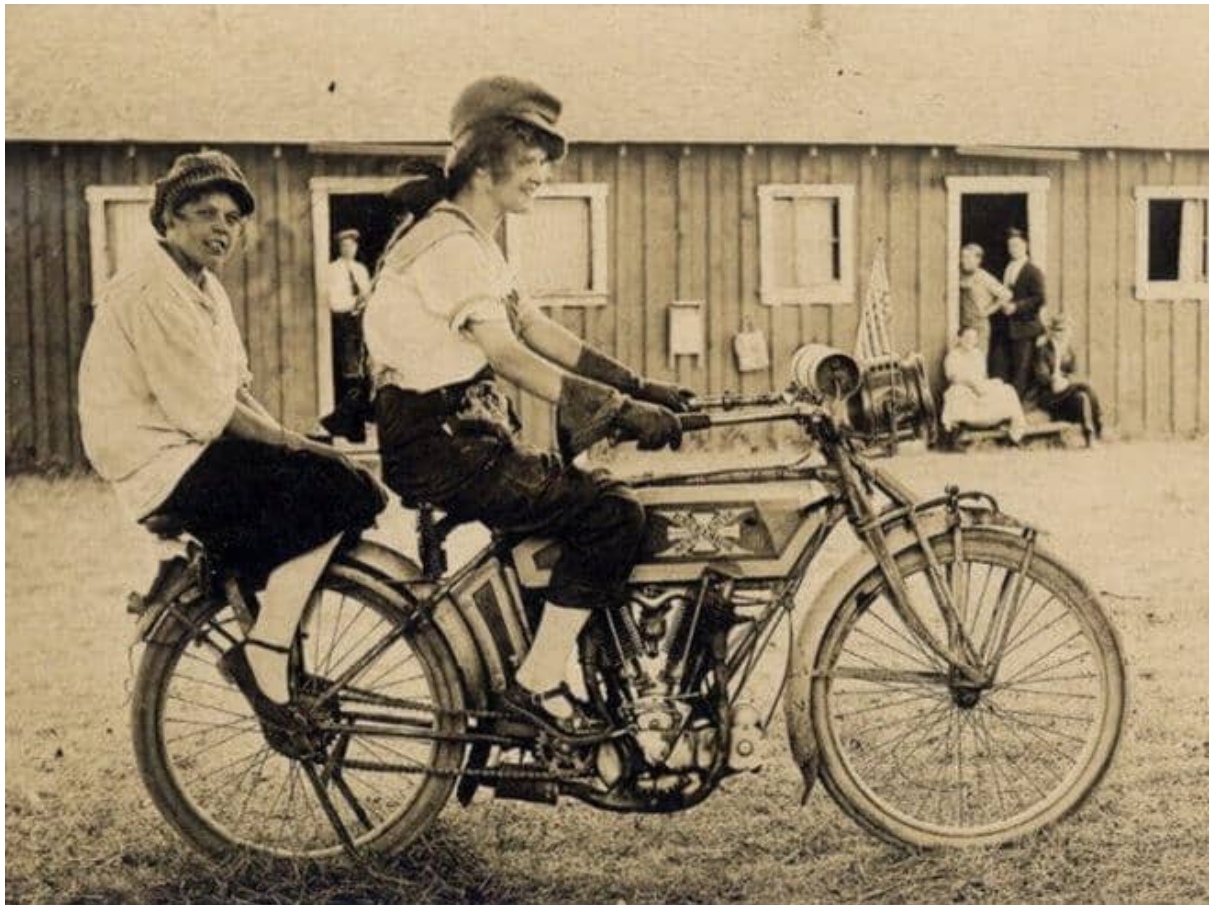






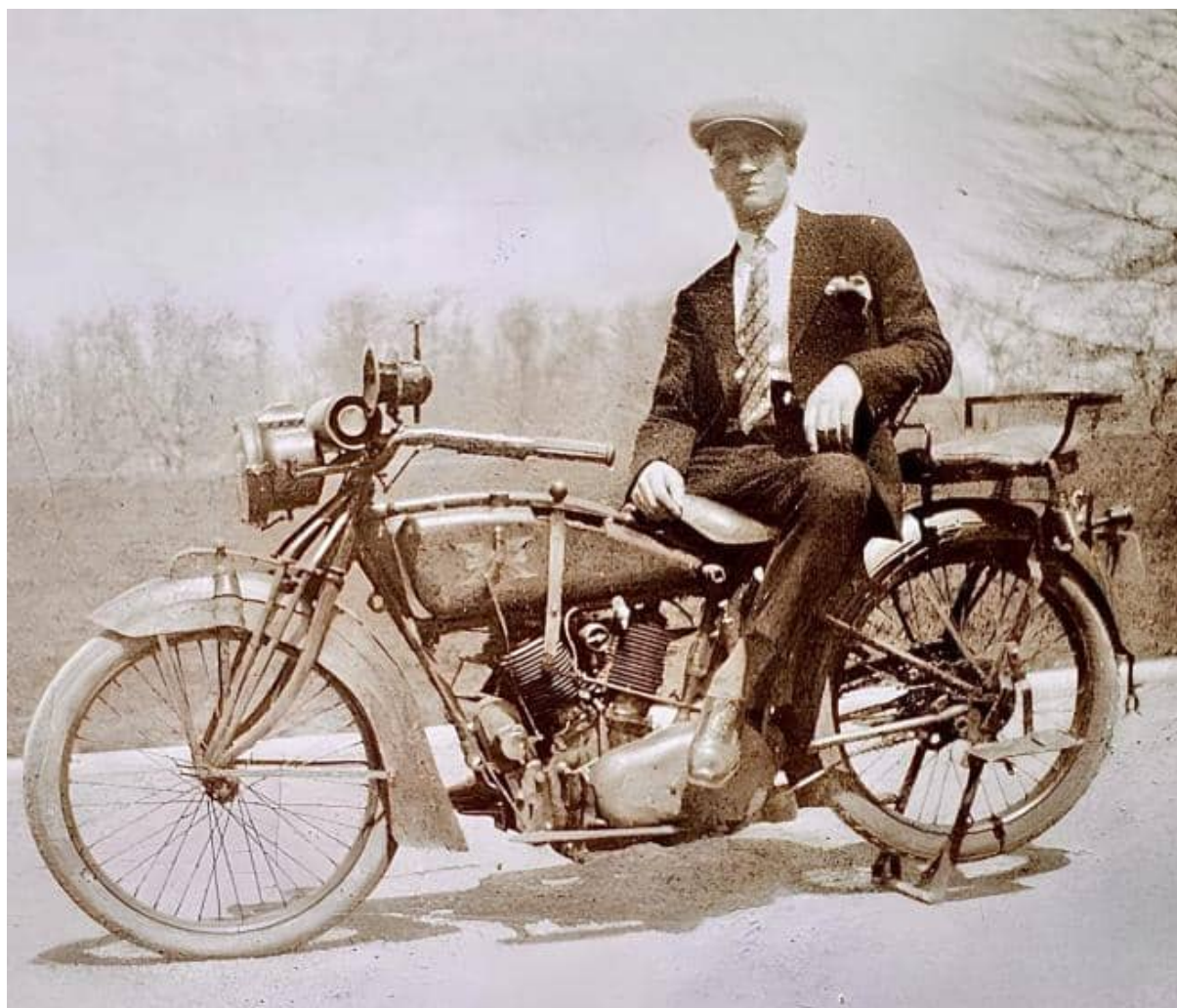


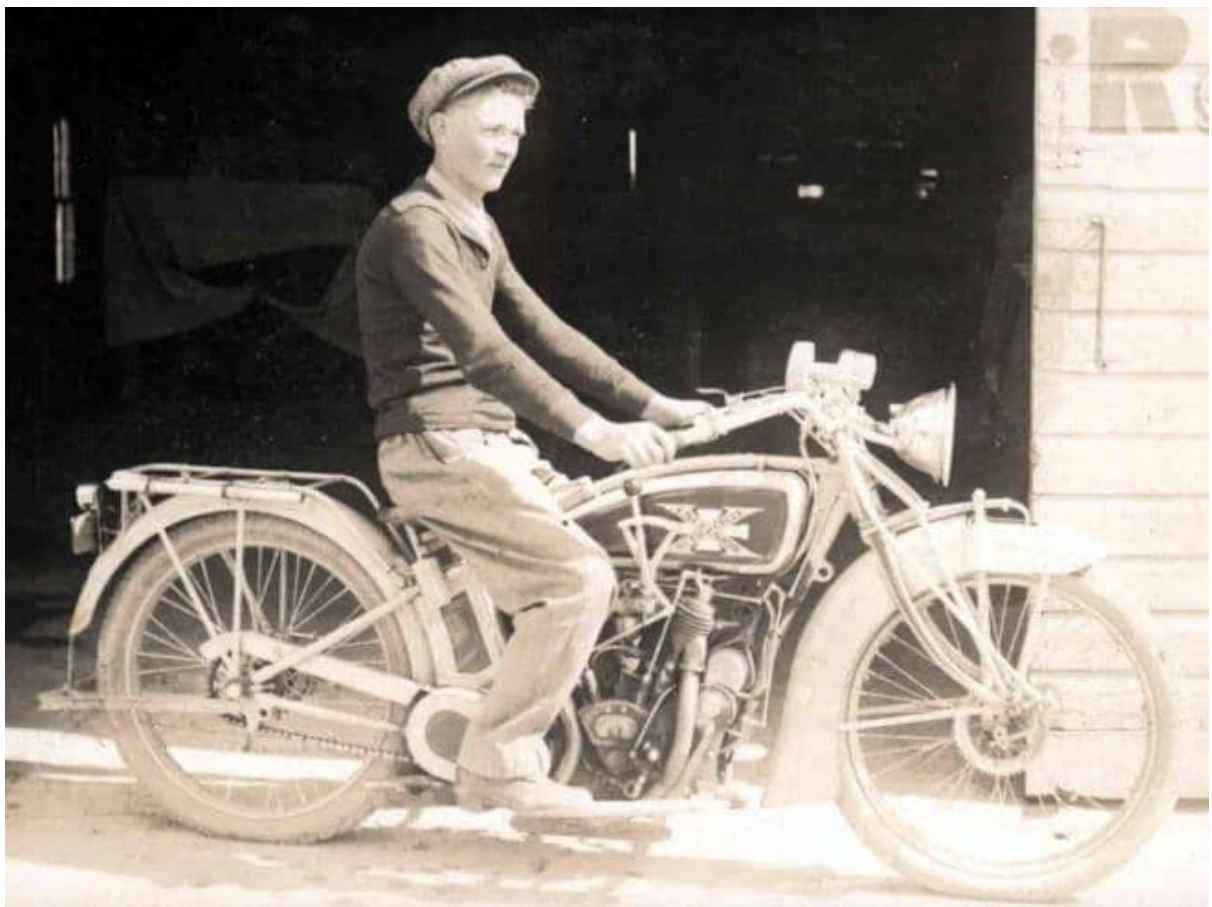




1917, Excelsiors take centre stage in Covina Ca.







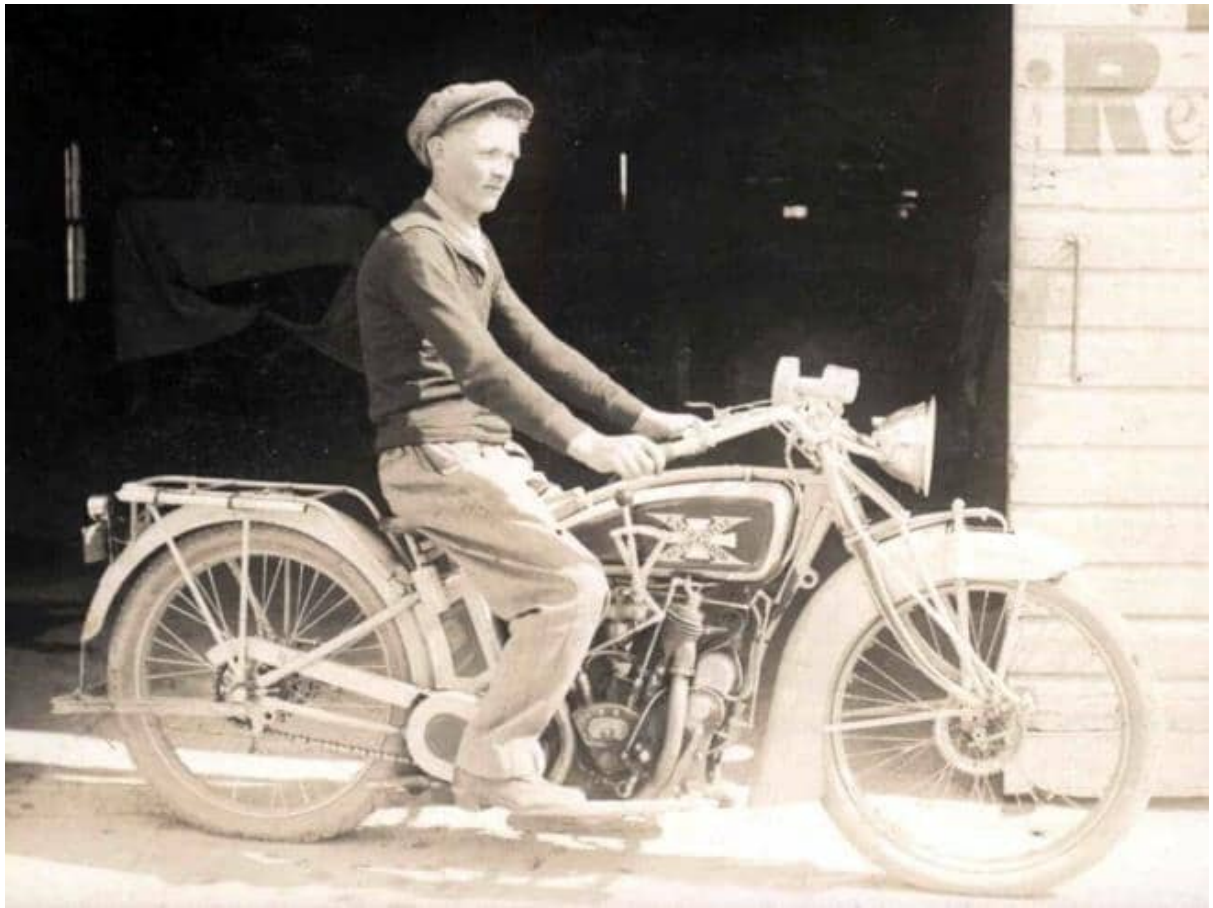




This early (pre-'X') Excelsior is pictured in South Whitley, Indiana.



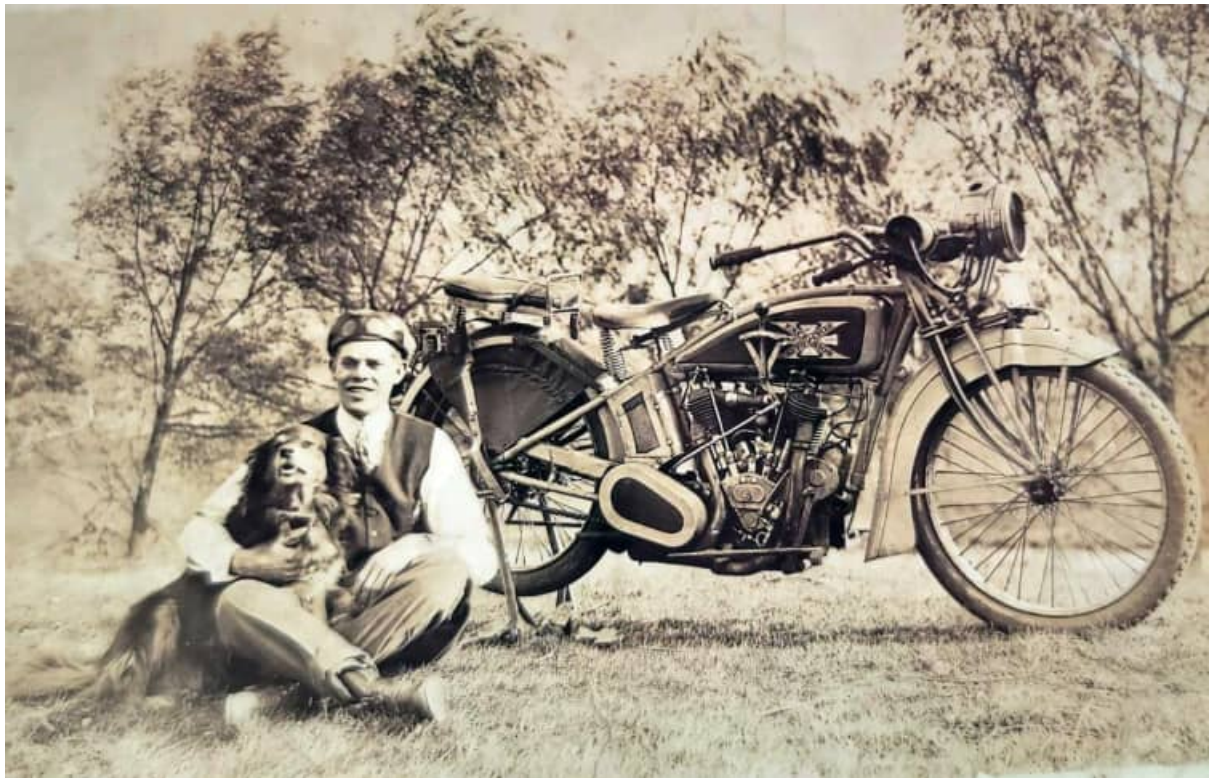






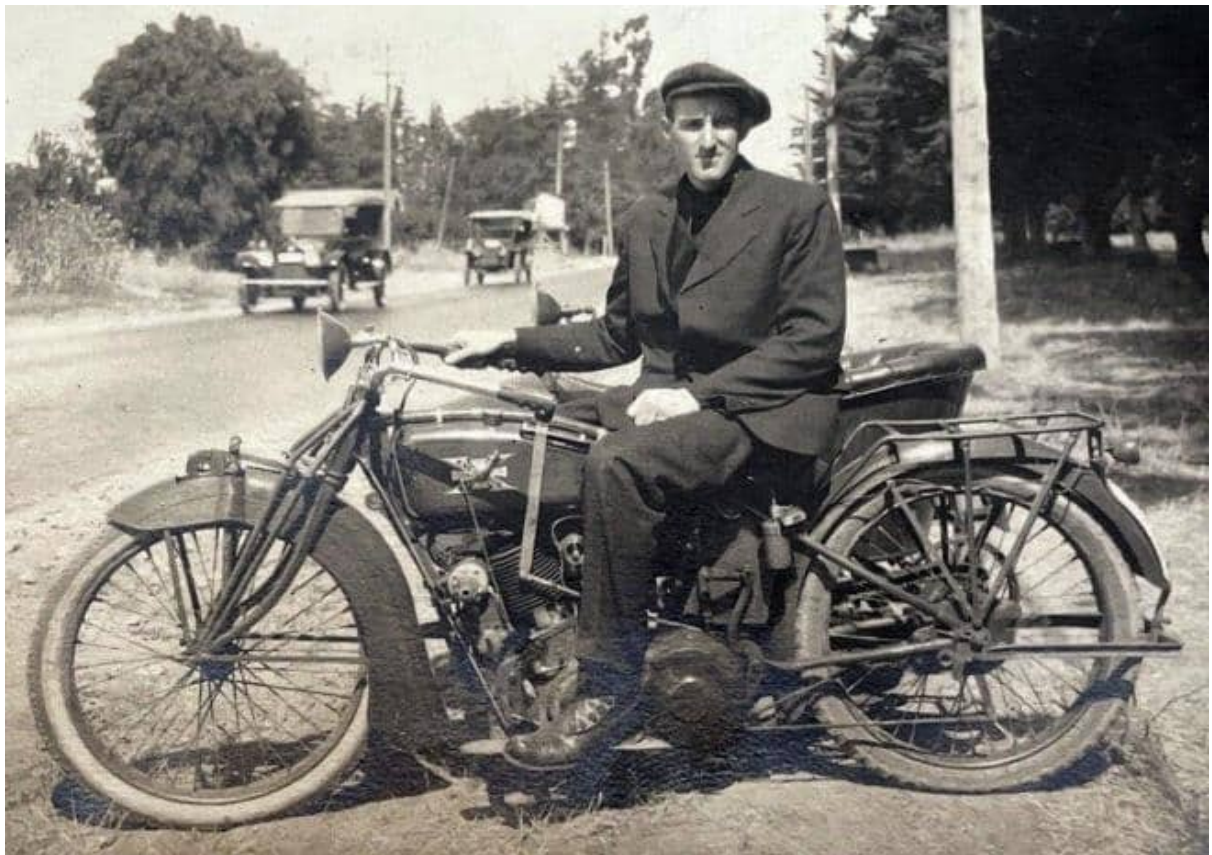






Going riding in Snow.

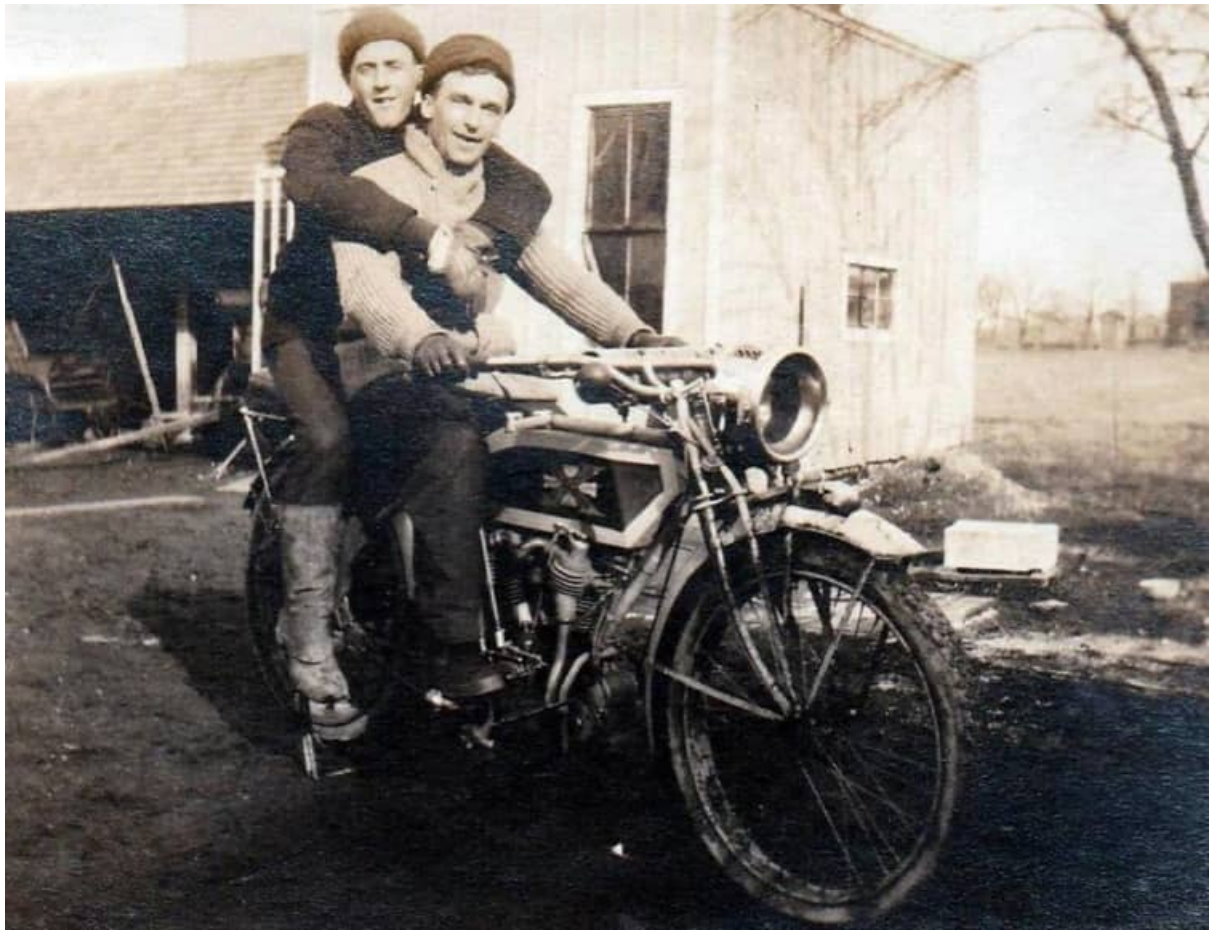






This Excelsior shows how the pillion seats of the time were mounted over the carrier...





...and an Excelsior clearly had room for two strapping chums.



The hill's certainly steep...





...but not as steep as the rough wooden autodrome where this Excelsior earned its keep in 1914.



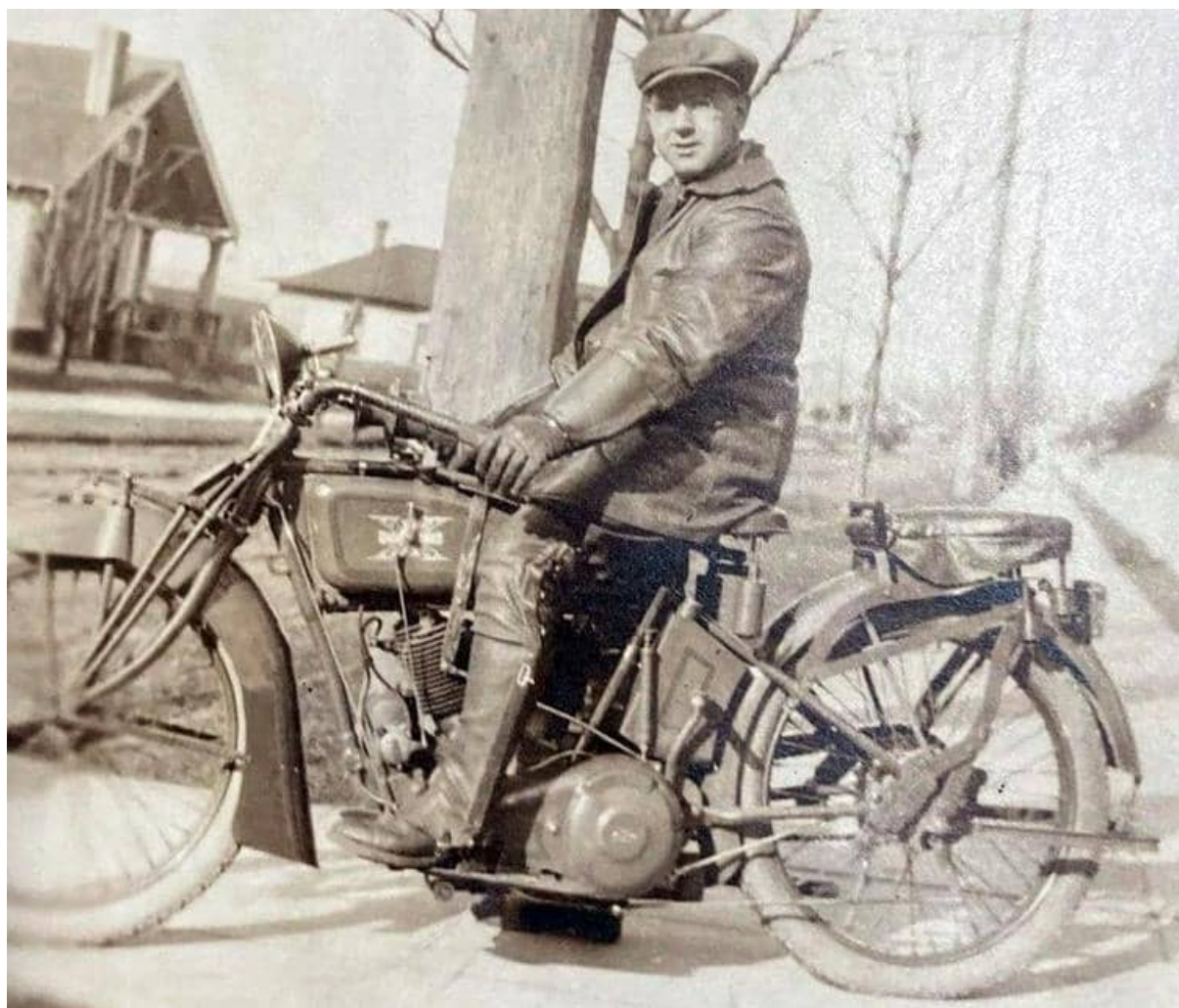




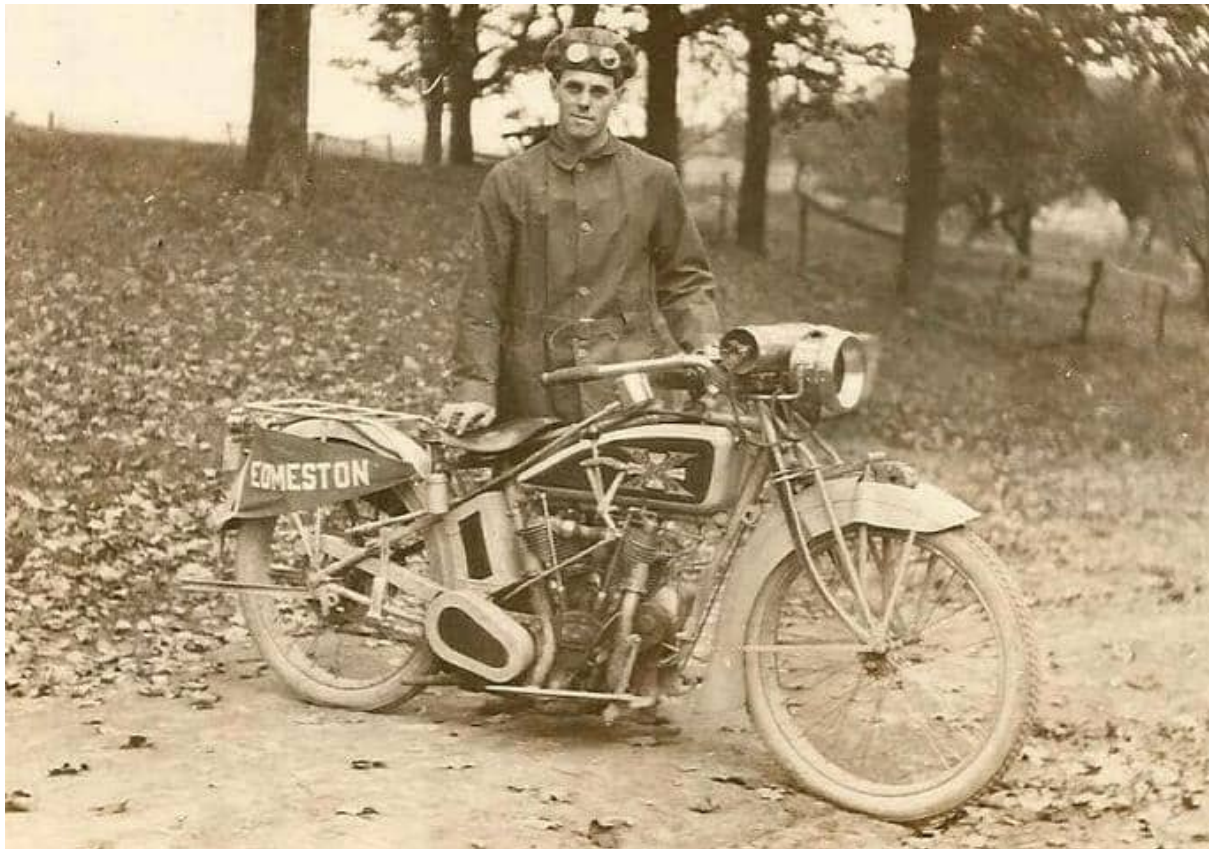
*Miss Agnes Goudy of Los Angeles is another member of the fair sex to adopt the motorcycle as the ideal means of travel and recreation during the war*

“Miss Agnes Goudy of Los Angeles

is another member of the fair sex to adopt the motorcycle as the ideal means of travel and recreation during the war.”







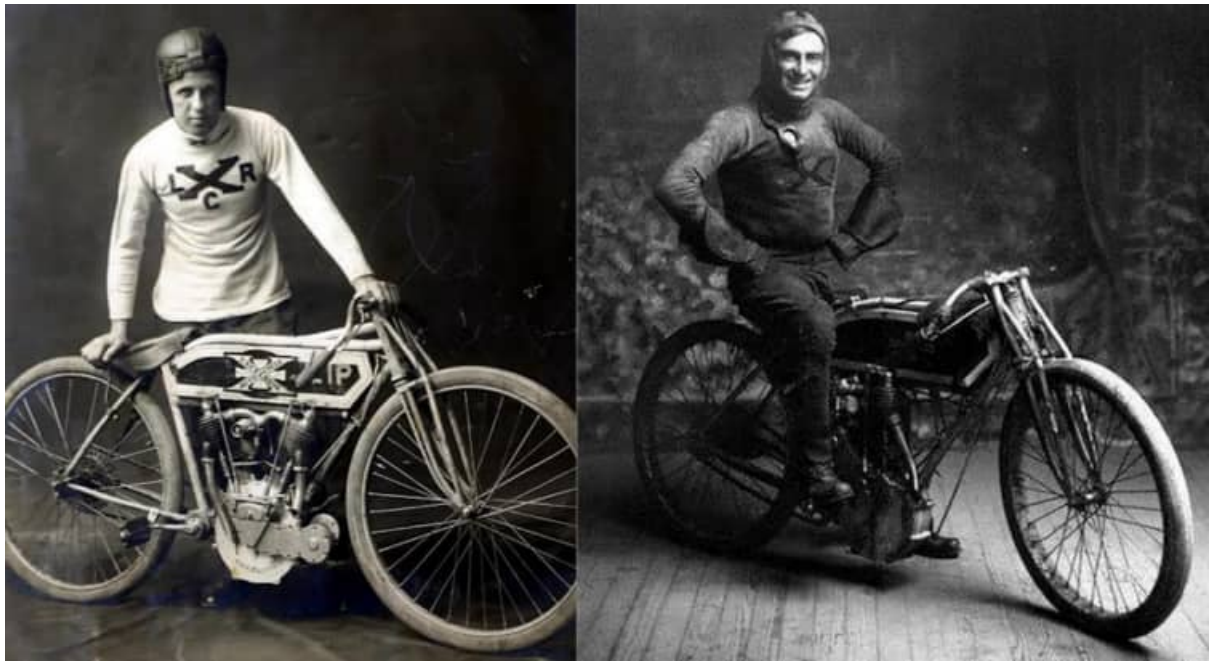
This Excelsior, carrying what is presumably a club pennant, dates from 1915.







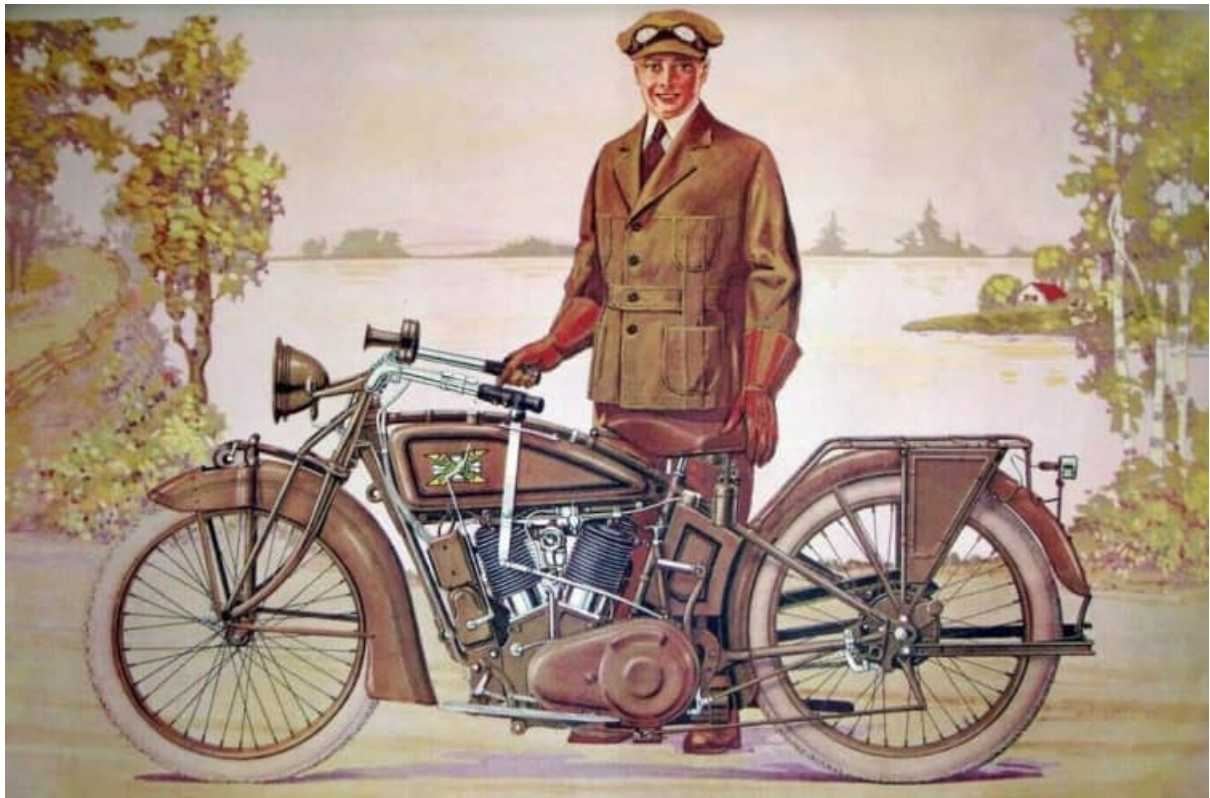




As well as making stylish roadsters, Excelsiors were competitive racers.



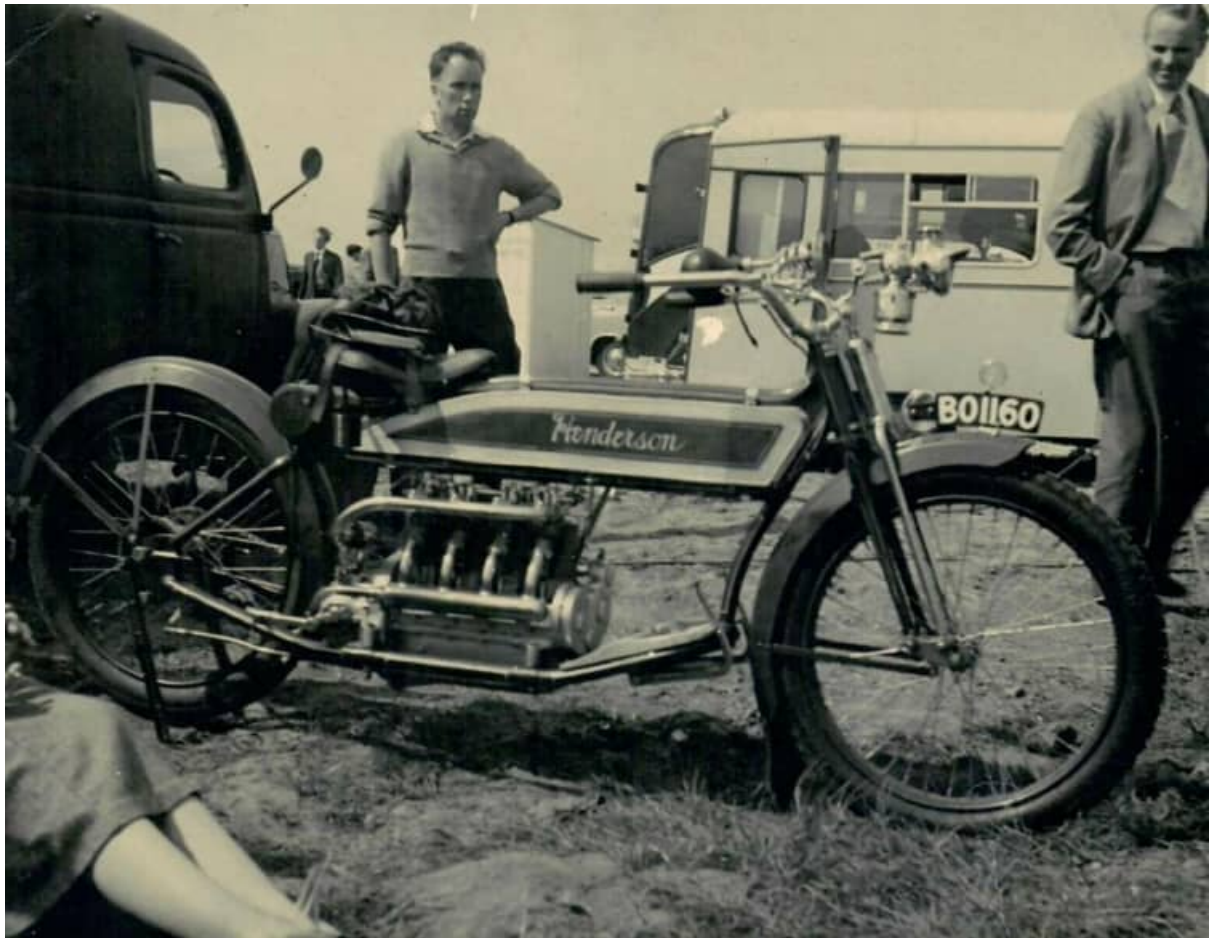




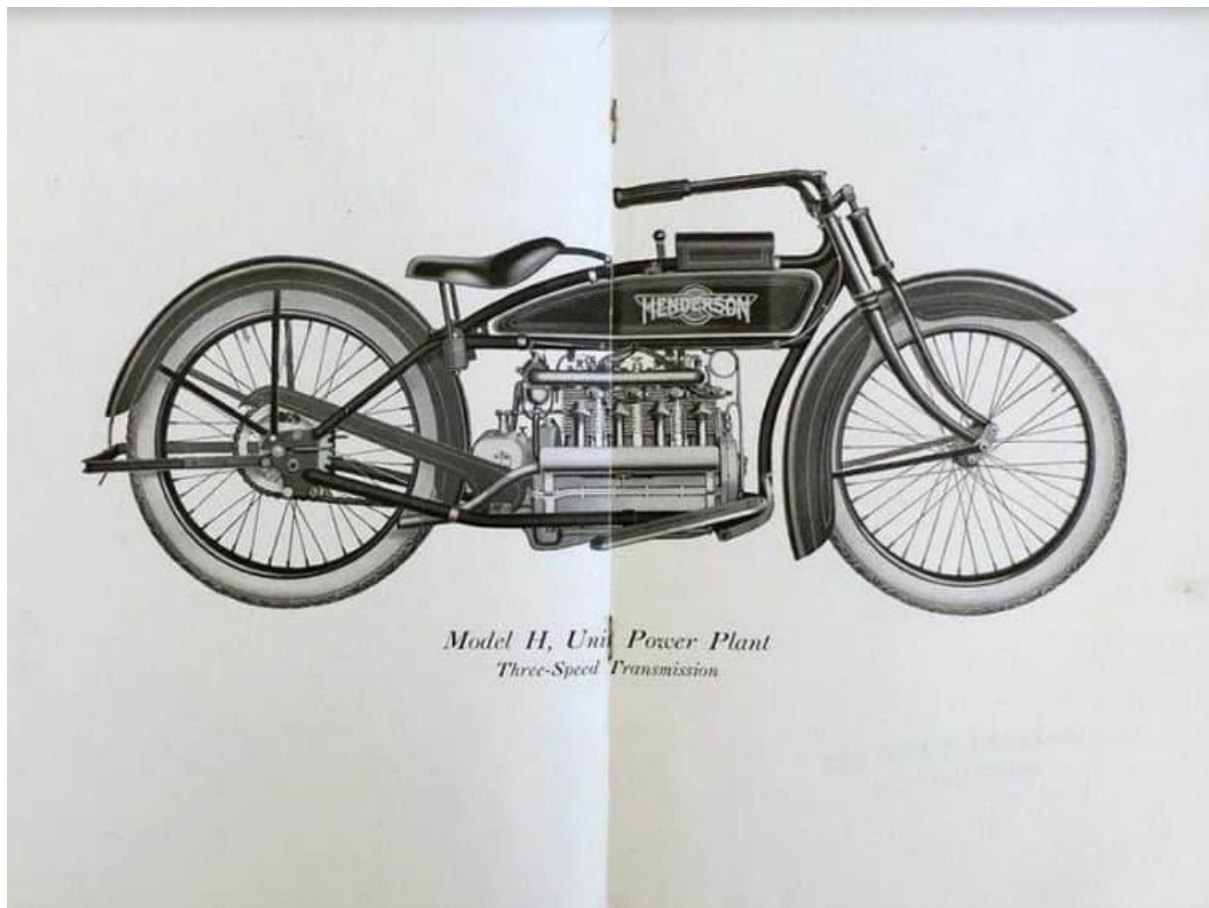


This is the Excelsior-Henderson plant.



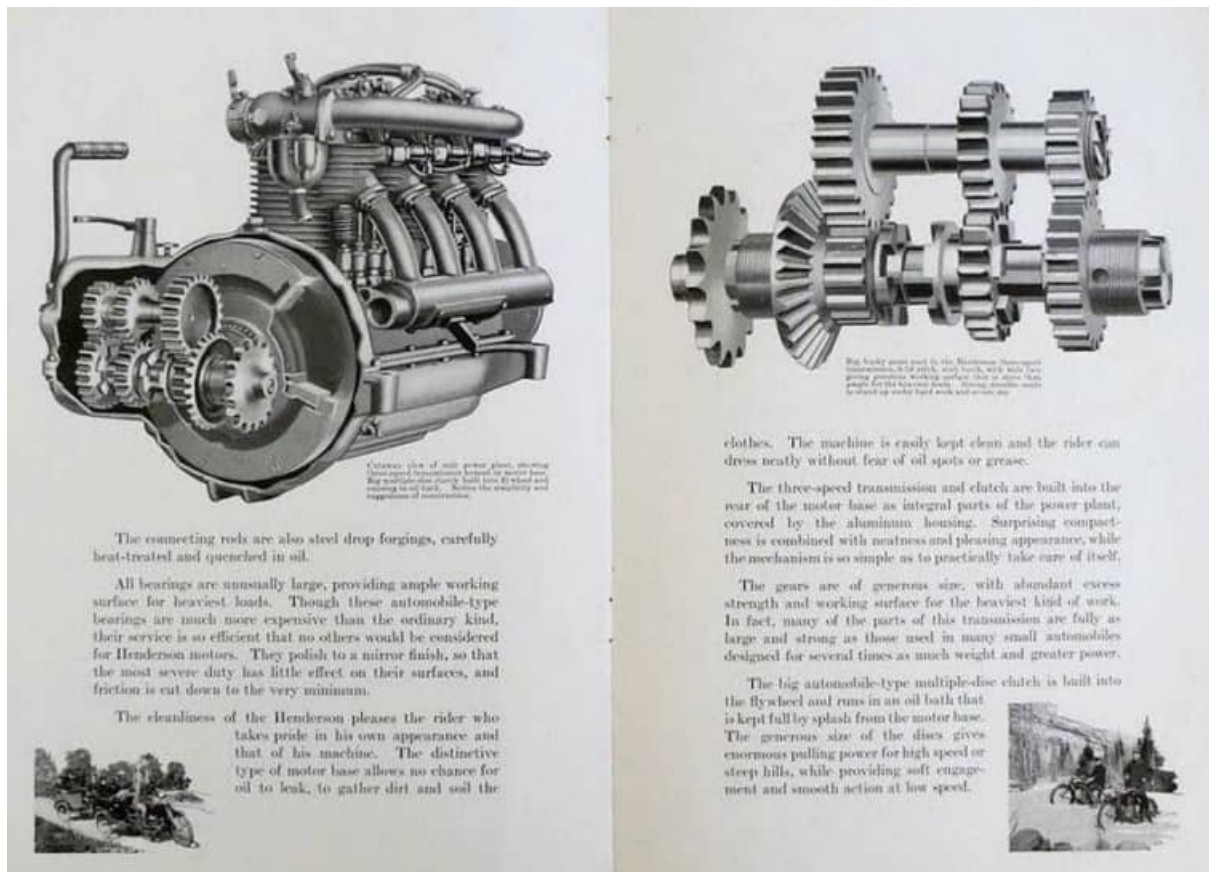


...and here a restored example. Mind you, this pic's probably 60 years old; I wonder the the big four's still about?



*Model H, Unit Power Plant  
Three-Speed Transmission*

This Henderson brochure dates from 1918.



The connecting rods are also steel drop forgings, carefully heat-treated and quenched in oil.

All bearings are unusually large, providing ample working surface for heaviest loads. Though these automobile-type bearings are much more expensive than the ordinary kind, their service is so efficient that no others would be considered for Henderson motors. They polish to a mirror finish, so that the most severe duty has little effect on their surfaces, and friction is cut down to the very minimum.

The cleanliness of the Henderson pleases the rider who takes pride in his own appearance and that of his machine. The distinctive type of motor base allows no chance for oil to leak, to gather dirt and soil the

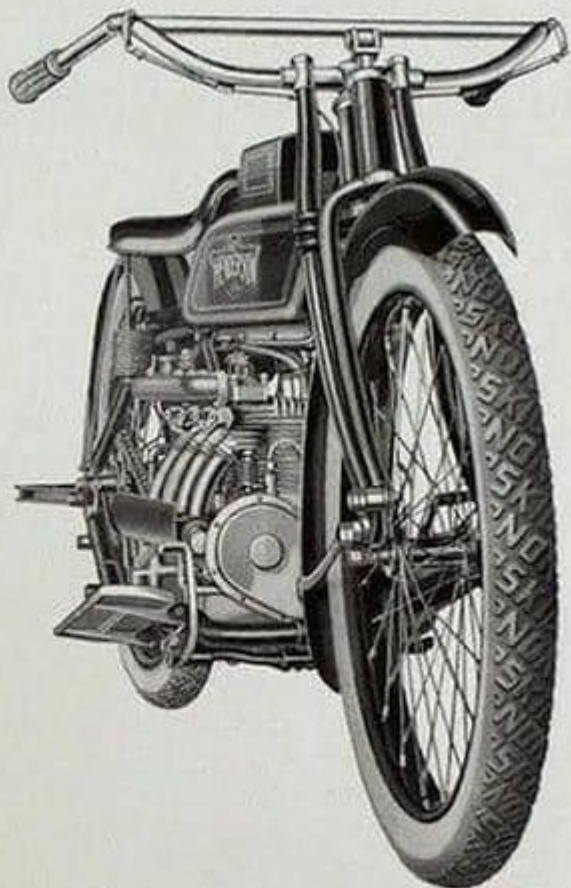
clothes. The machine is easily kept clean and the rider can dress neatly without fear of oil spots or grease.

The three-speed transmission and clutch are built into the rear of the motor base as integral parts of the power plant, covered by the aluminum housing. Surprising compactness is combined with neatness and pleasing appearance, while the mechanism is so simple as to practically take care of itself.

The gears are of generous size, with abundant excess strength and working surface for the heaviest kind of work. In fact, many of the parts of this transmission are fully as large and strong as those used in many small automobiles designed for several times as much weight and greater power.

The big automobile-type multiple-disc clutch is built into the flywheel and runs in an oil bath that is kept full by splash from the motor base. The generous size of the discs gives enormous pulling power for high speed or steep hills, while providing soft engagement and smooth action at low speed.





It embodies the hard-won knowledge that leaves no item in doubt, for back of every part stands its convincing record of performance.

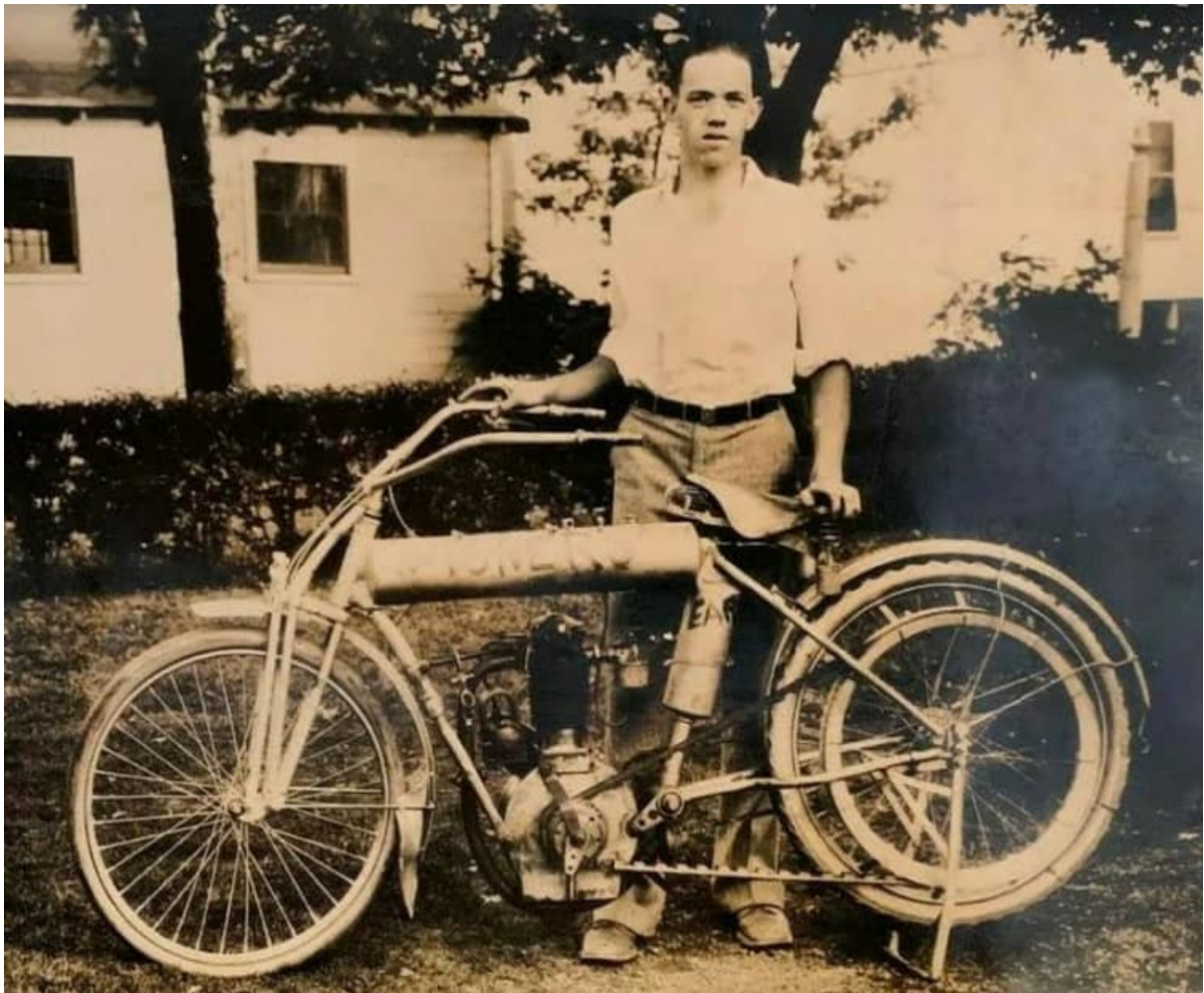
The vital advantages of better original design are accentuated by the practical results of seasoned experience. In year after year of actual use, the worth of every detail has been proved by consistent accomplishment.



These Henderson-mounted cops were snapped in 1928.



# Curtiss



Here's a rarity: a Curtiss, and the nipper who had it, and flogged it. Check out the original press agency caption, below.

INTERNATIONAL  
SLUG..(RELIC)

ANOTHER RELIC FOR FORD MUSEUM

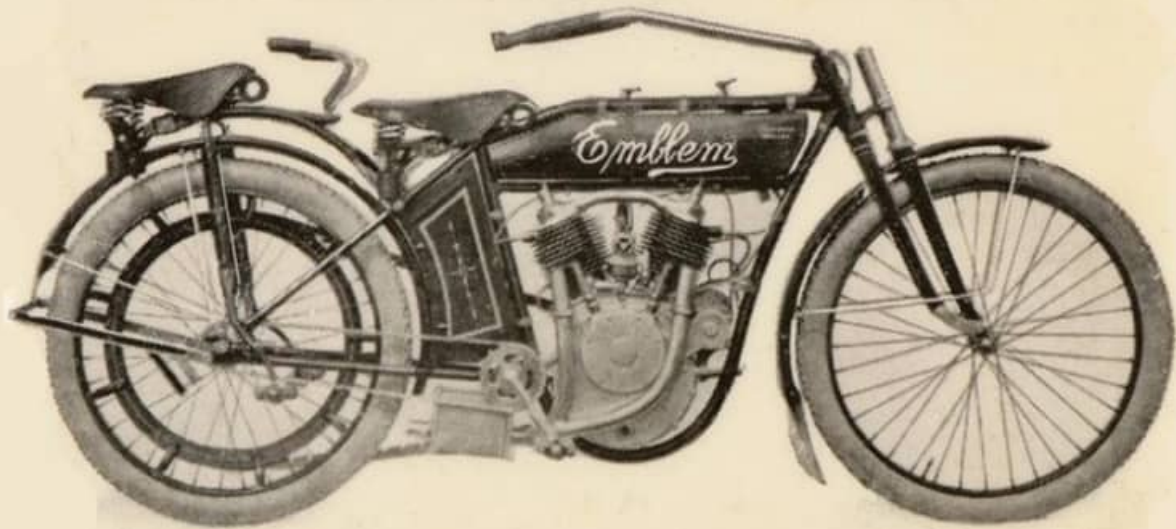
LAKEWOOD OHIO...DON J. PEARSON 16 WITH  
1910 CURTIS "BLACKHAWK" MOTORCYCLE THAT HE  
HAS SOLD TO HENRY FORD FOR \$25.00. THE  
ONE-CYLINDER BELT DRIVE, VEHICLE WILL TAKE XXX  
ITS PLACE WITH OTHER RELICS IN FORD'S MUSEUM.  
ONLY A FEW MACHINES OF THIS MODEL WERE MAN-  
FACTURED THE BOY SAID. CLUTCH IS ON THE HANDLE  
BARS AND THE BRAKE IS LIKE THAT OF AN ORDINARY  
BICYCLE.

E-7-2-29

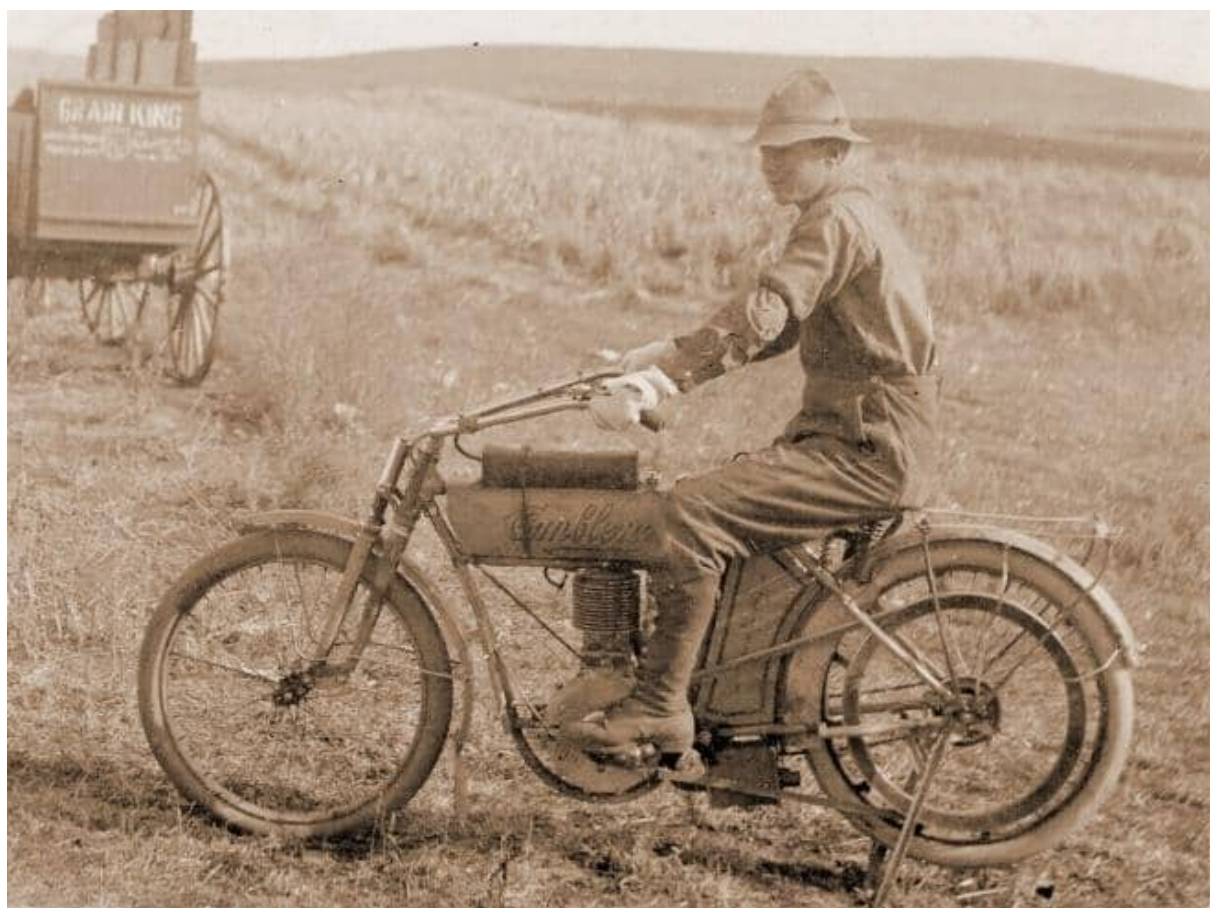
**EMBLEM**



STRENGTH and POWER



EMBLEM MFG. CO. ANGOLA, N.Y.



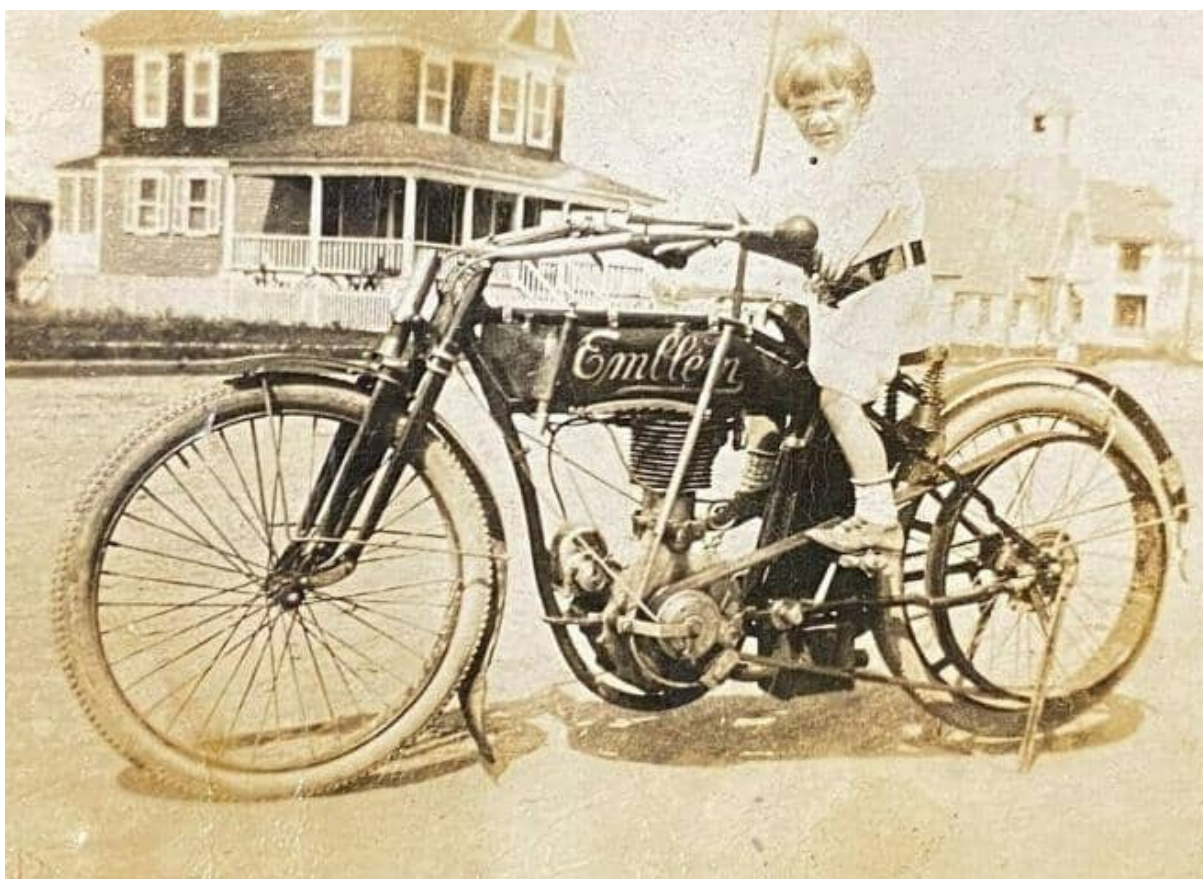


This 1917 Emblem is a 680cc Little Giant. Why 'Little Giant'? Because in 1913 Emblem's first V-twin was based on two of its singles and had a capacity of 1,255cc which was in its day the biggest engine on any American bike.

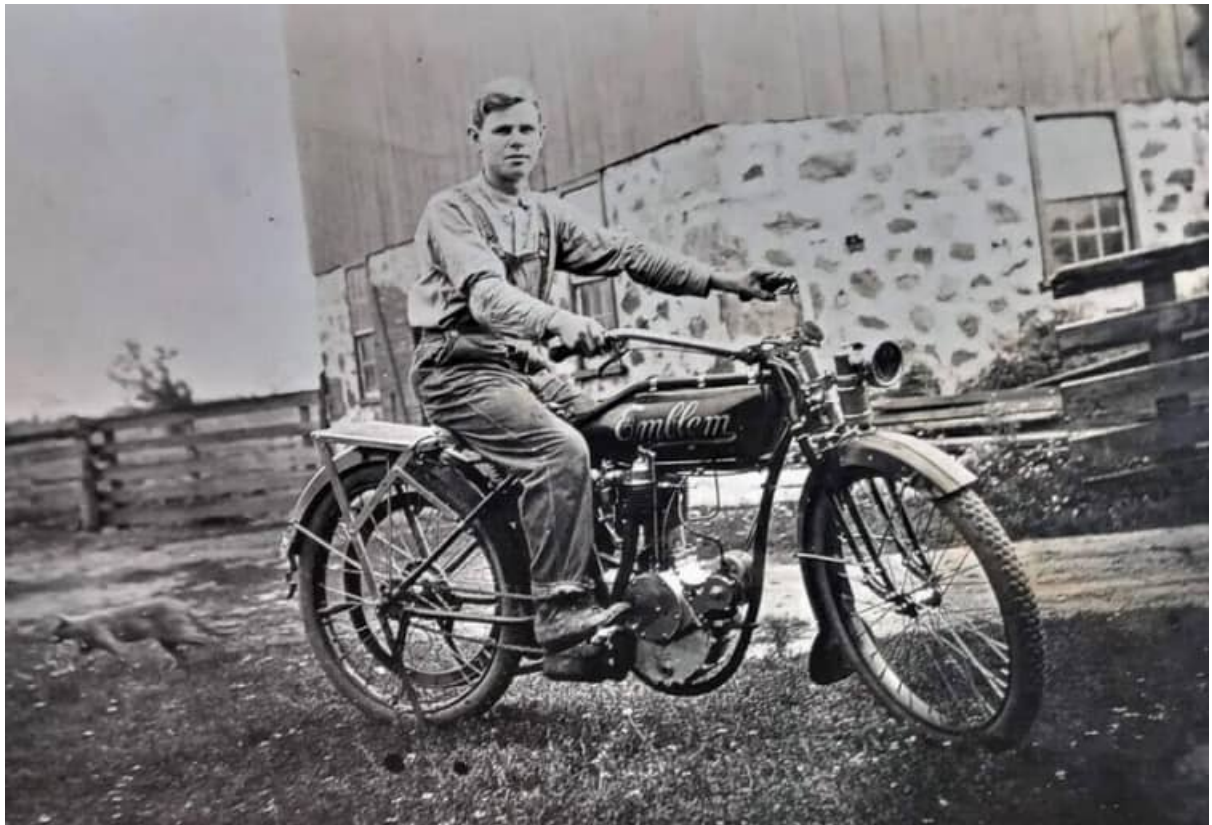




...and here's an unrestored Emblem.



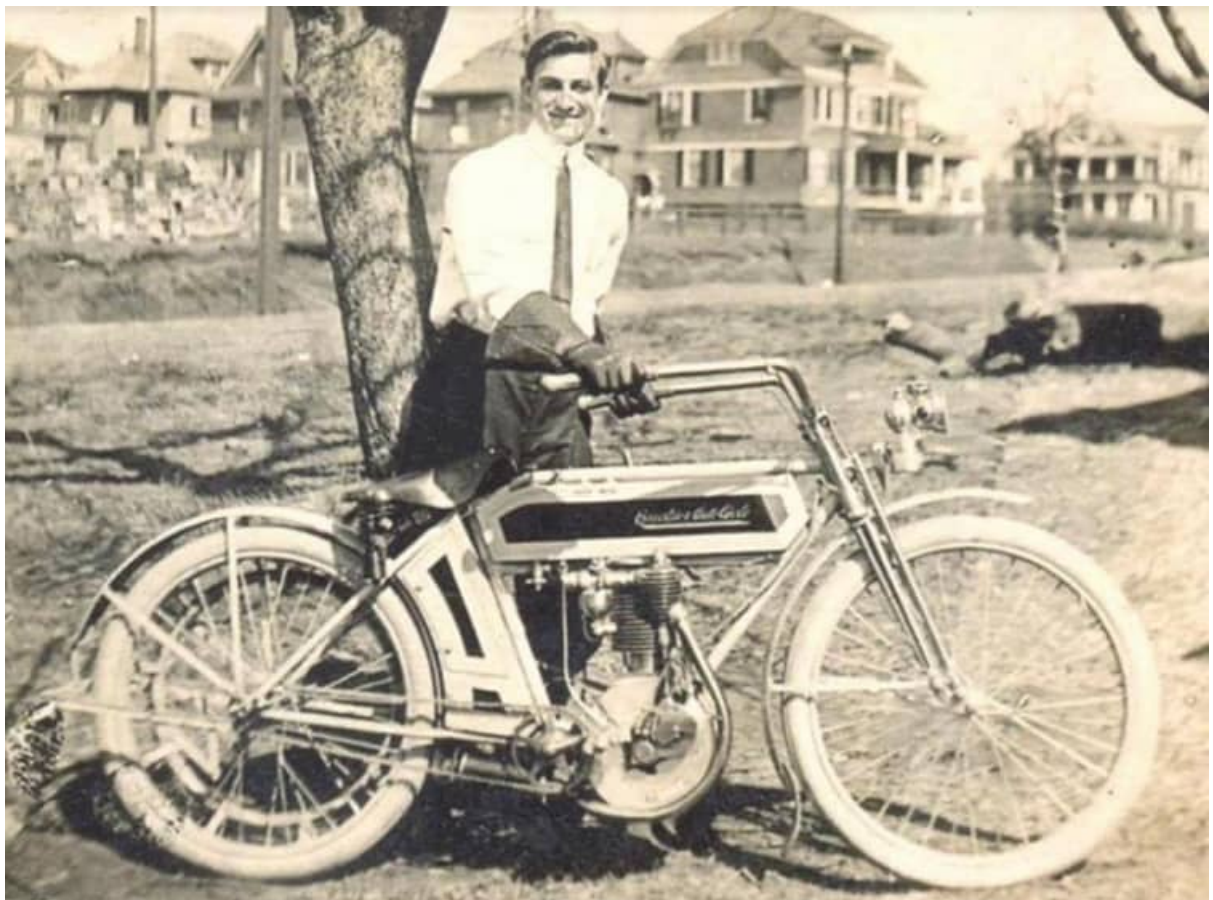
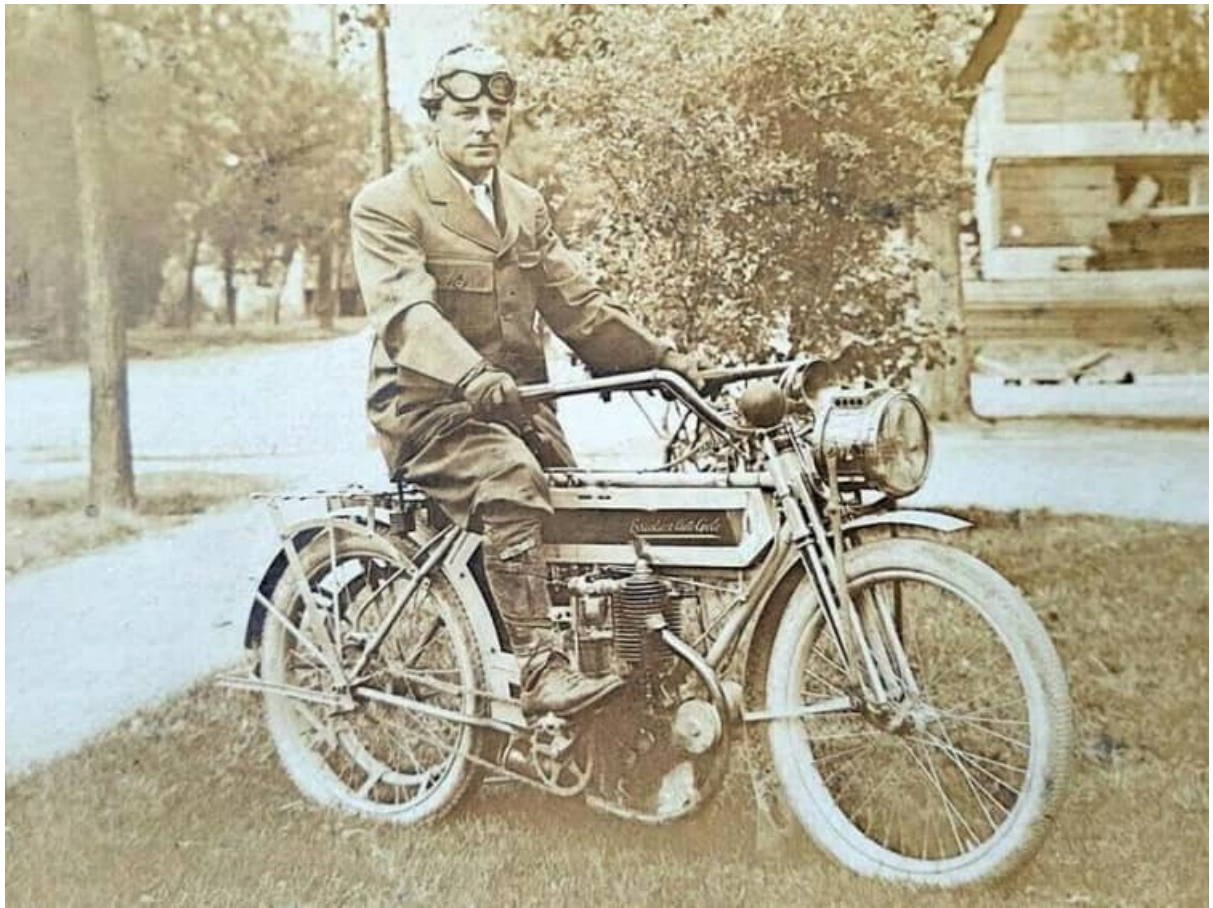




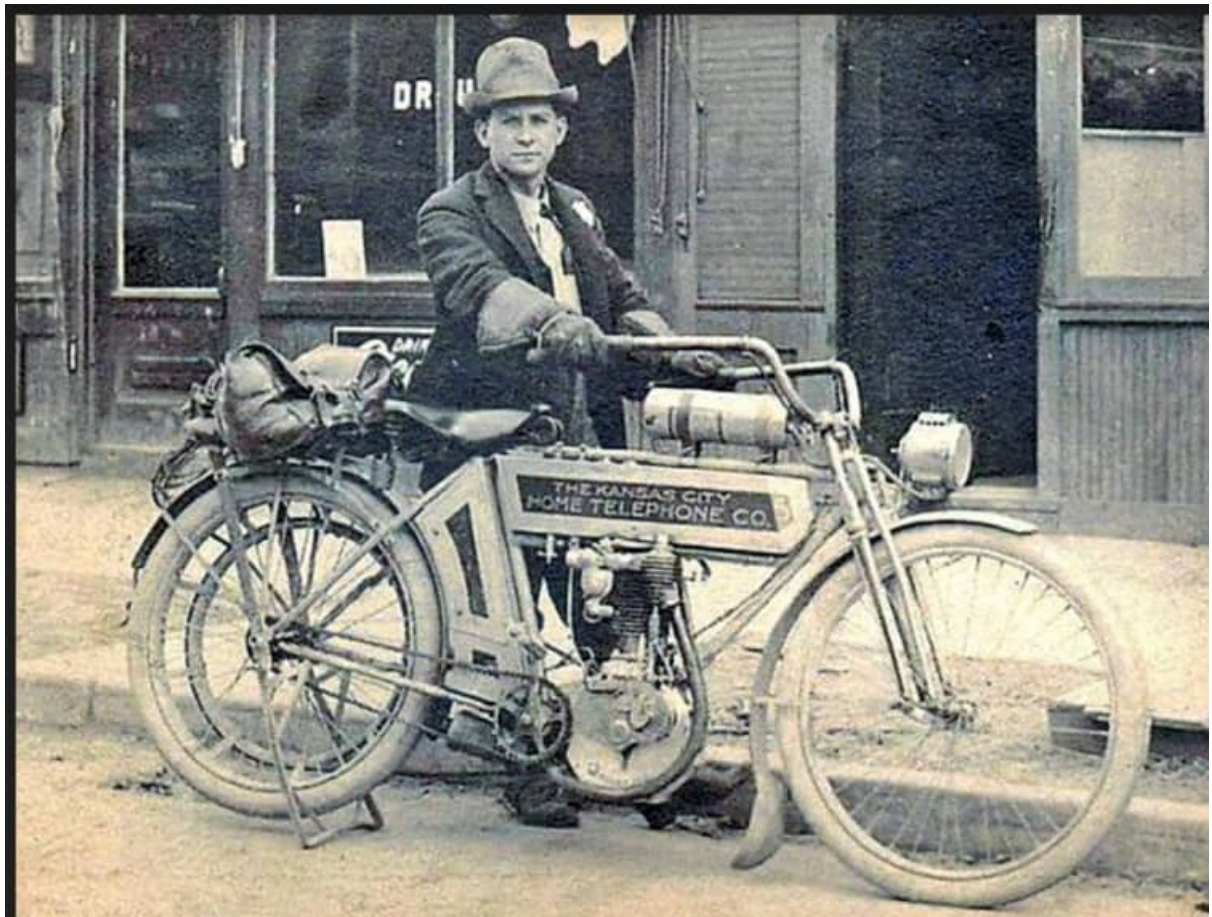
















Two Wagners, both built in 1909, one pictured in 1909, t'other as it looks after 113 years.





This excellent studio portrait dates from 1912.

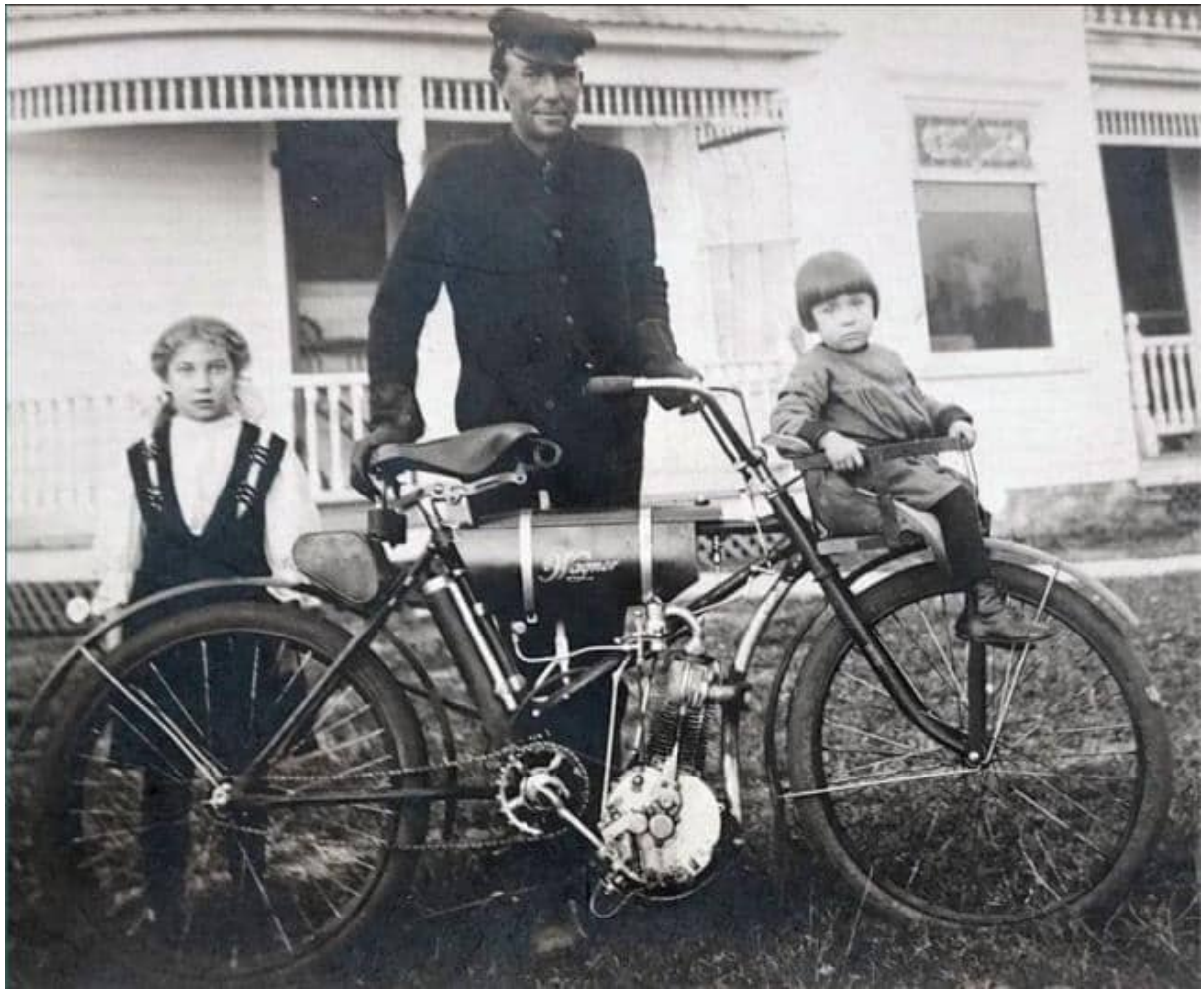




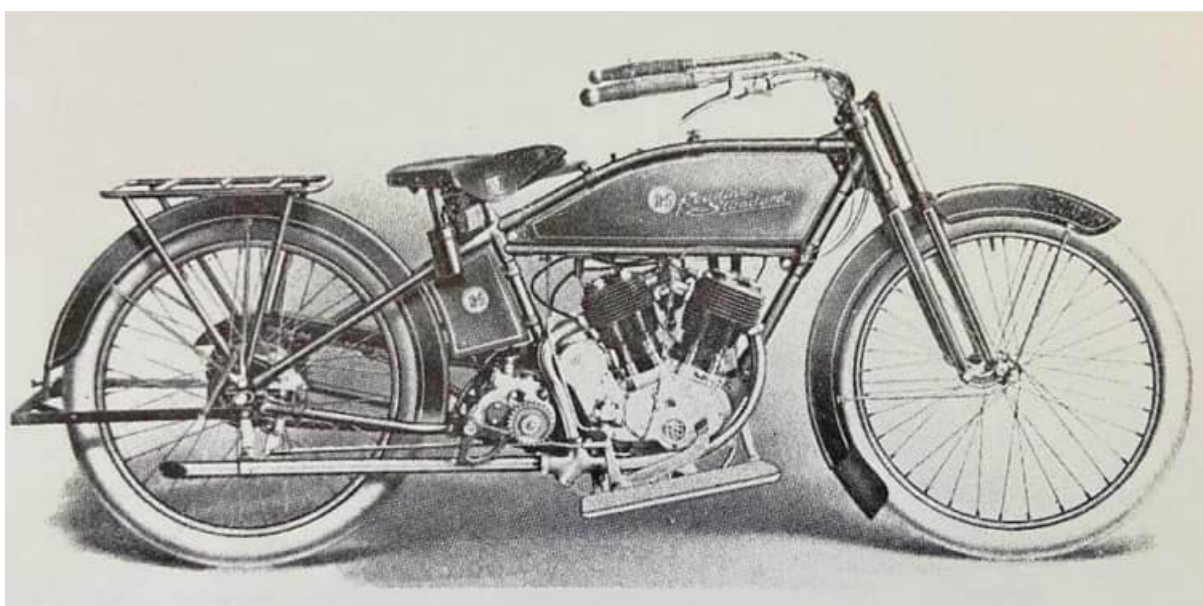
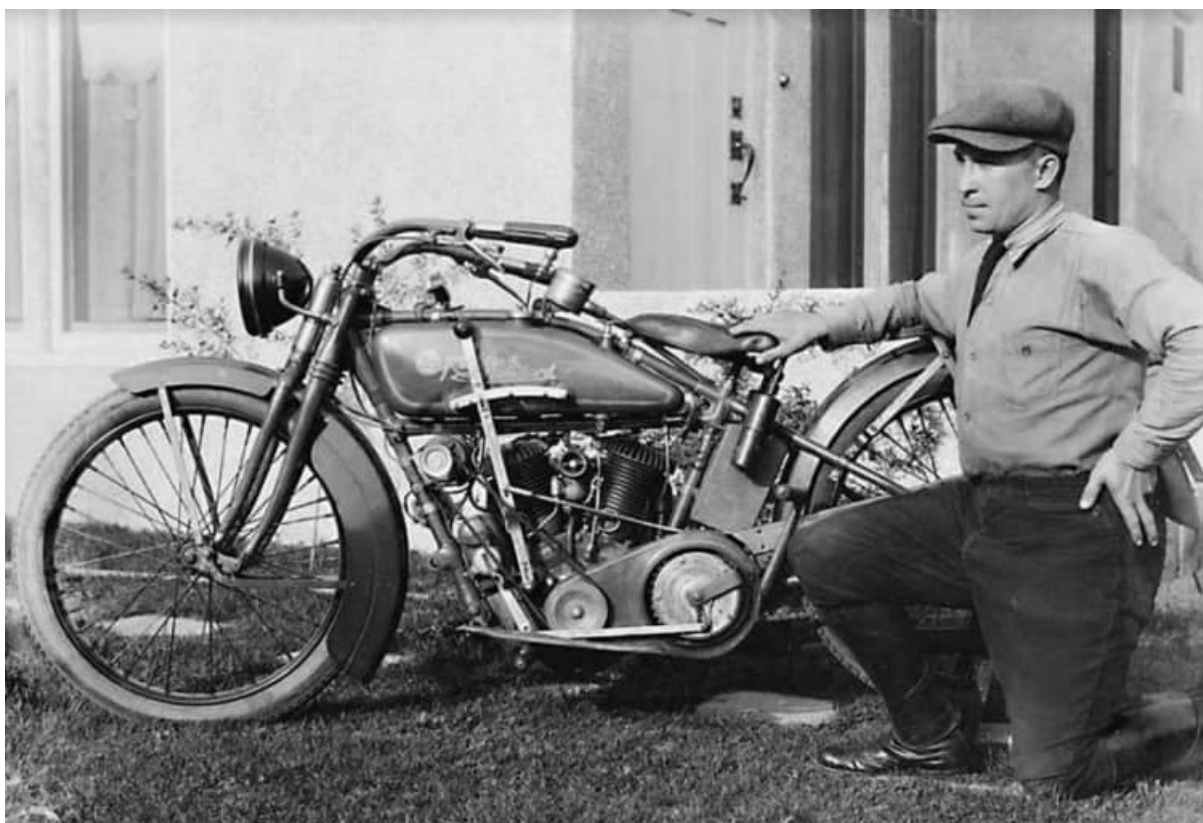
from around 1915.

This Wagner dates





*Reading  
Standard*



This is the 1915 model Reading Standard.

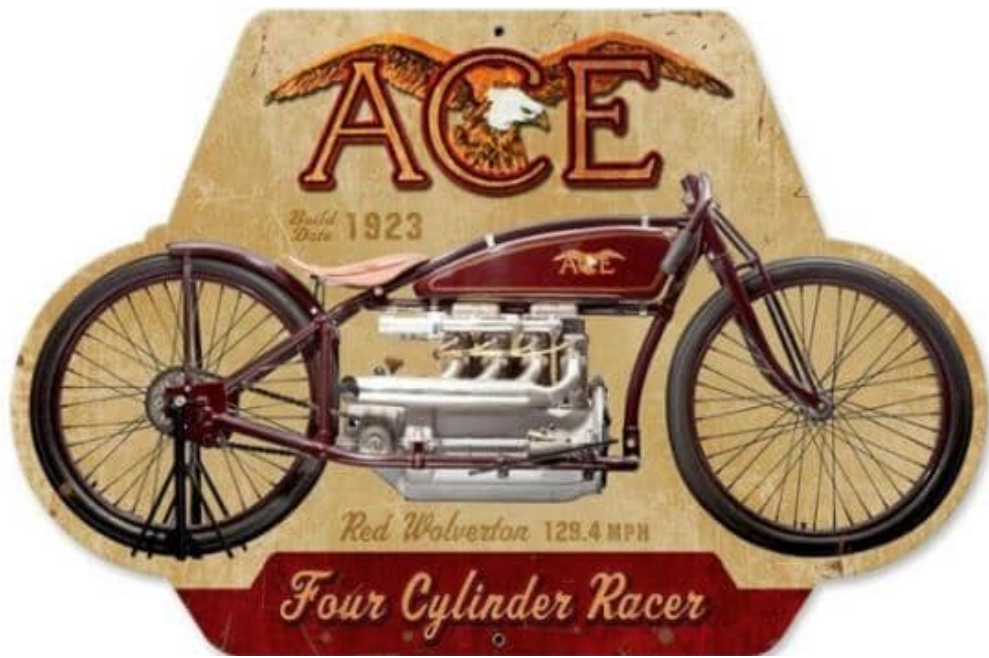




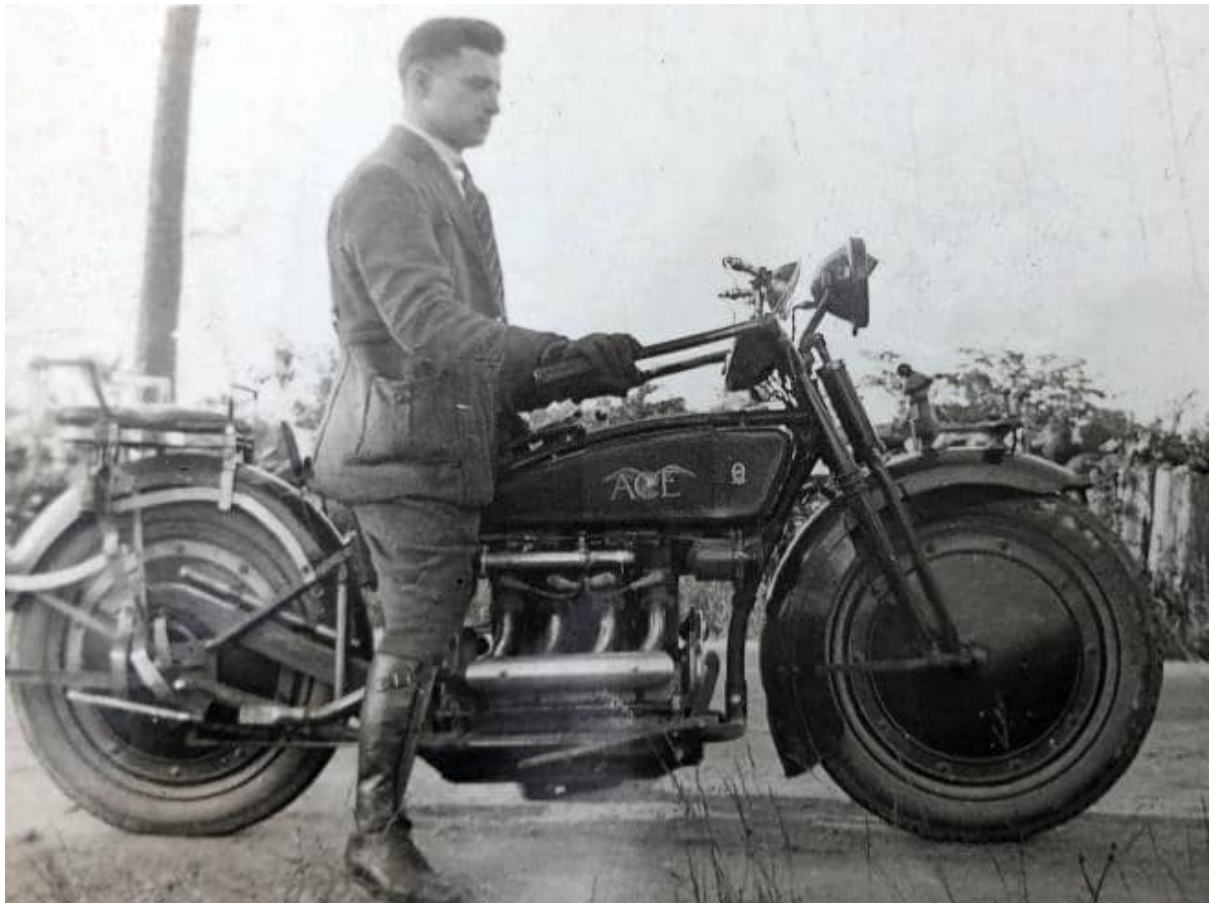






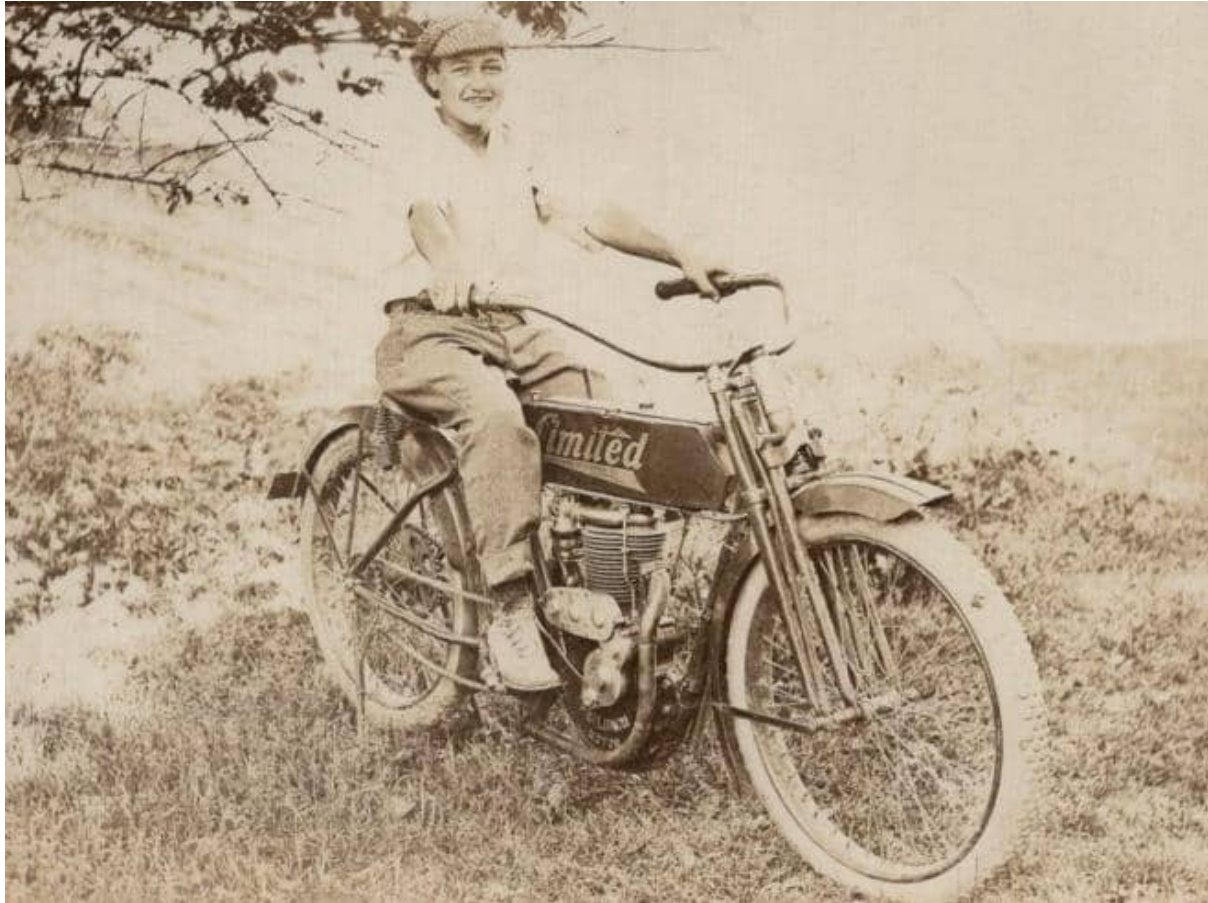






HARLEY-DAVIDSON WASN'T the only motor cycle manufacturer in Milwaukee. In 1904, a few months after the first Harley took to the road, Arthur and William Feilbach completed a 350. In 1912, having produced about 30 hand-built bikes, Arthur set up the Feilbach Motor Co, with the backing of several Milwaukee businessmen. A pukka factory was built and in 1913, when a 1,130cc V-twin was introduced, FMC sold 50

singles and 108 twins, now badged Limited. In 1914 production approached 1,000, a shaft-drive twin was launched and the Milwaukee cops used Feilbachs. But production ceased that year amid rumours that Harley-Davidson had used its influence by denying Feilbach access to capital resources.



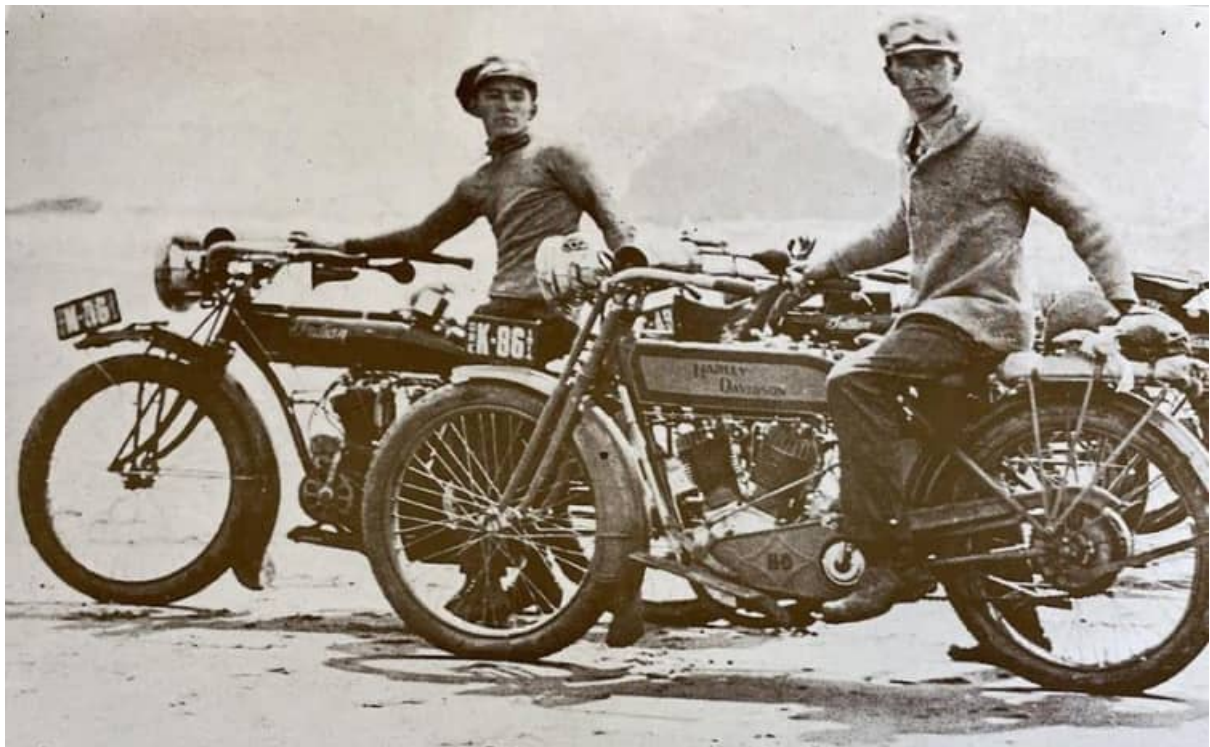
FMC's Limited singles were hand-built and evolved year by year, with increased capacity, magneto ignition, a spring fork and a bigger gas tank.





No more than five Limited twins survive; this beauty graces the St Francis Motorcycle Museum in St Francis, Kansas.

***And here's a melange of Americans and their bikes starting, inevitably, with Harleys vs Indians...***

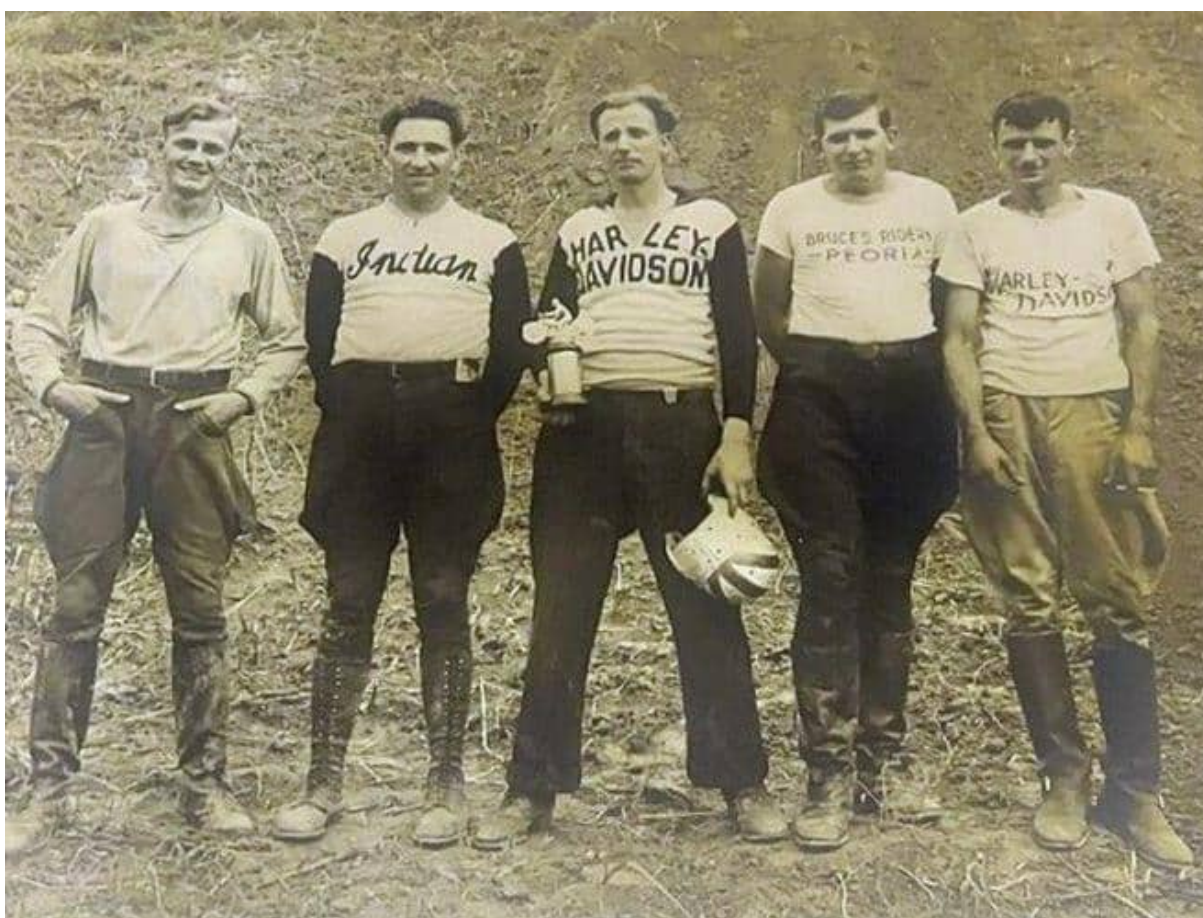








These riders are lining up at the Rose City Track, Portland, Oregon.





San Francisco 1919. Were these serious riders Great War veterans looking for adventure?







With a big twin, a canoe for a side hack (as our colonial cousins described their sidecars) and his trusty longarm, this hardy pioneer was clearly able to live off the land.



...and while these smartly dressed chaps look less like pioneers, their outfit is still just the job.





“Scarcely tempting now—but when they are broiled there is nothing better than broiled lobsters. Mrs John E Hogg, wife of the well known writer, shows off a few of the day’s catches.” Fowl, fish, lobsters, outfits brought home the bacon.



1921: These stalwarts are State Police Troopers in Batavia, New York.









1914: These riders are Portland MC members, so this is Oregon.



These members of the Buckeye MC from Ohio are on an AMA Gypsy Run.





This damsel hails from Sibley, Iowa.







1914: These mailmen seem to be mounted on Excelsiors and Harleys.



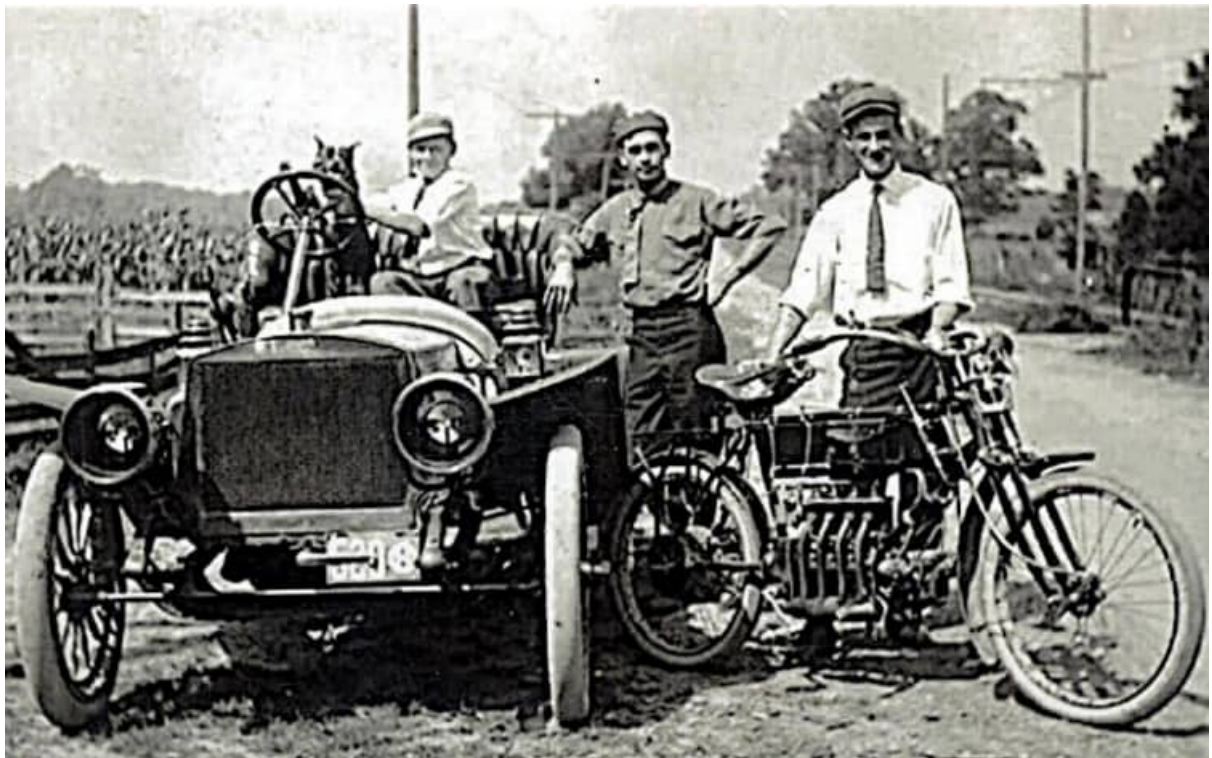
This indoor portrait features a Yale, a Merkel and an Indian, as well as a rather cute puppy.











Seattle, 1914 and what seems to be the start of a road trial.



Motor Cycle Races, State Fair Grounds, Syracuse, N. Y.





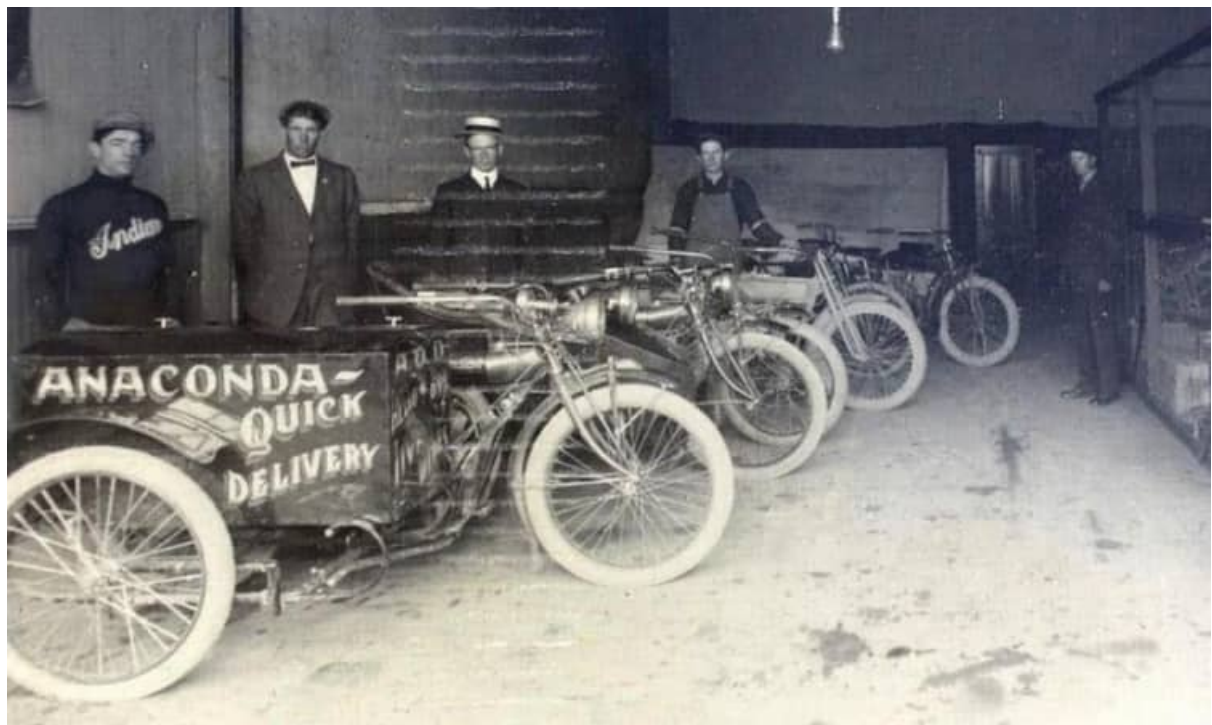


These cheerful chaps were pictured in 1915.













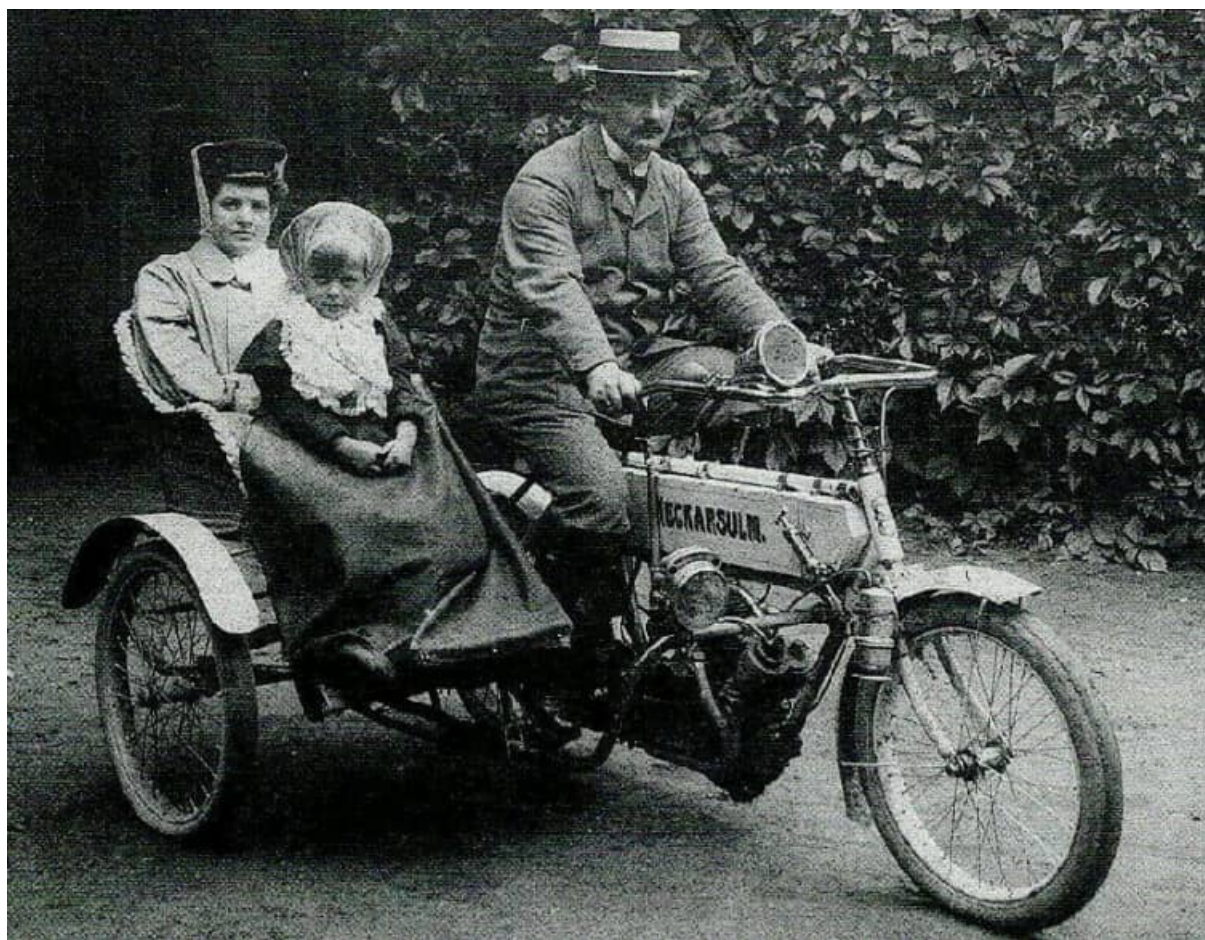






That was fun, but now, let's get back to Europe.









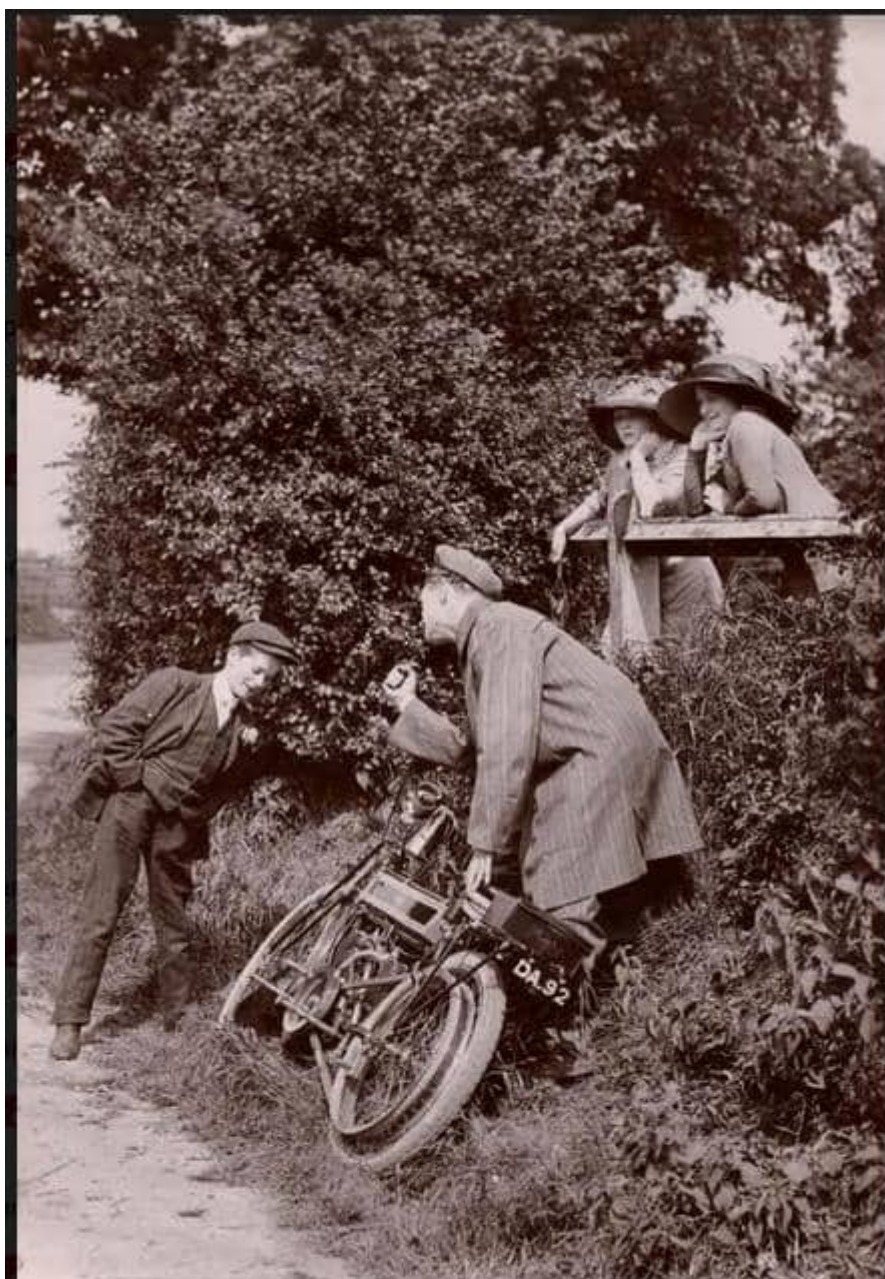












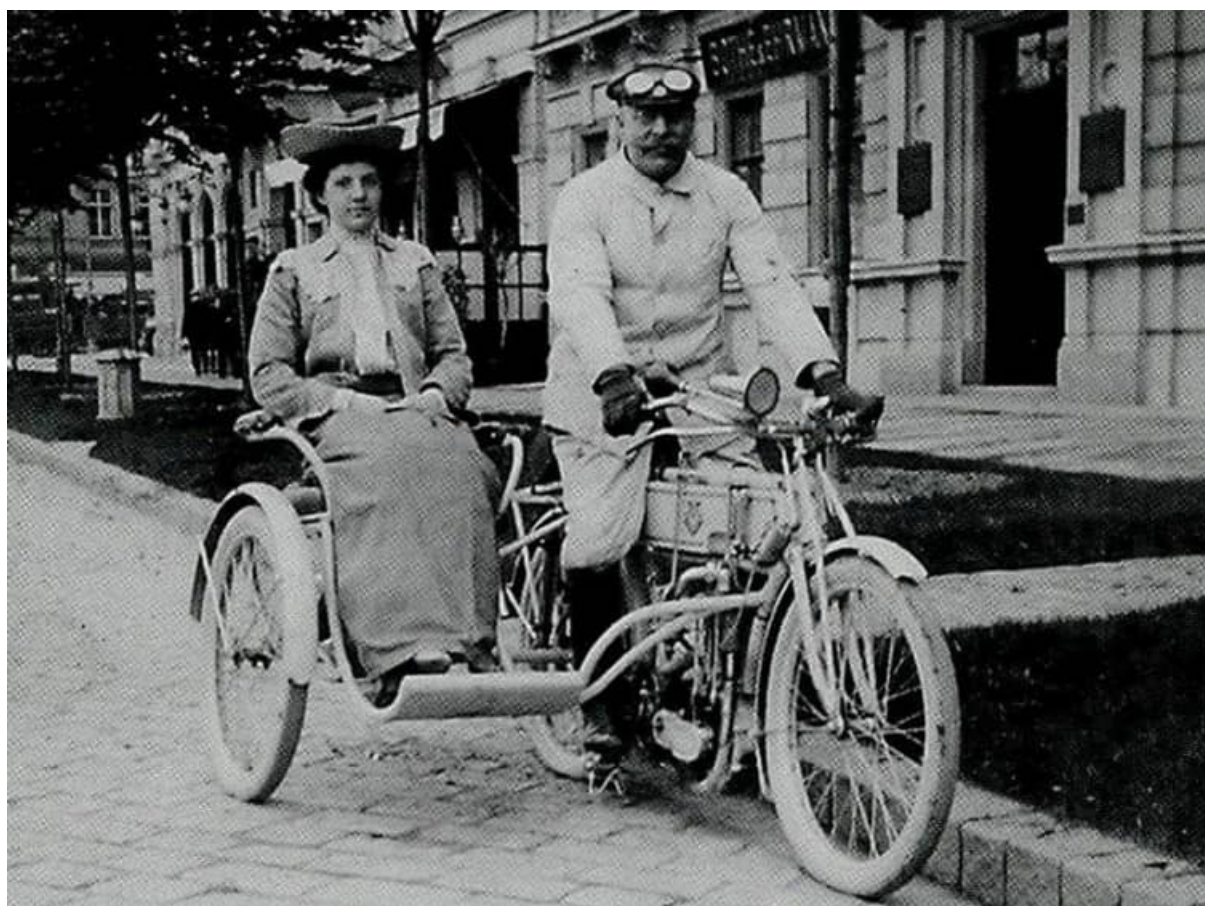
*I had no petrol and the Nipper whistled  
"Home, Sweet Home!"*



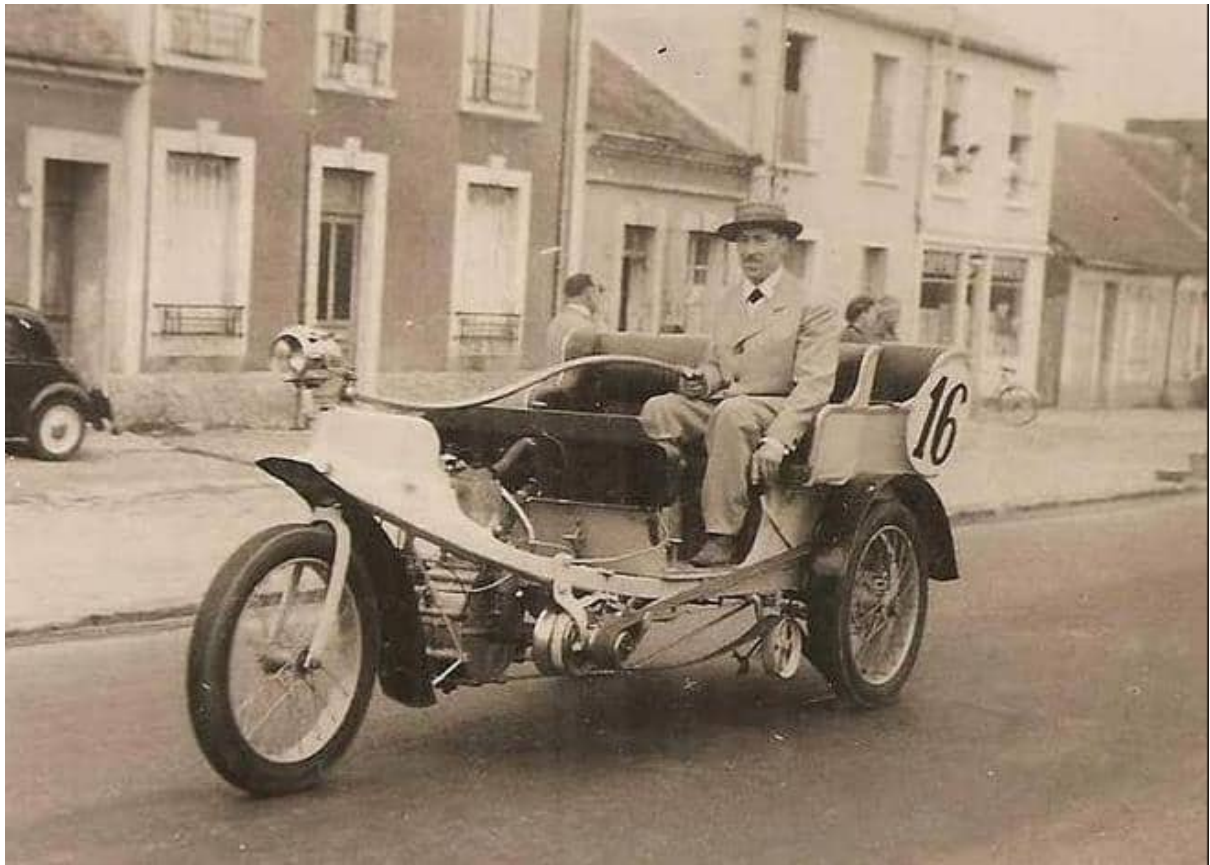
A. Grub, Berlin SW68











This tri-car was pictured at Le Mans; judging by the competition number this elegantly dressed chap was engaged in a rather gentile race.





LES SPORTS. — NOS MOTOCYCLISTES  
Auguste FOSSIER sur sa Moto de Course

*Collections ND Phot*











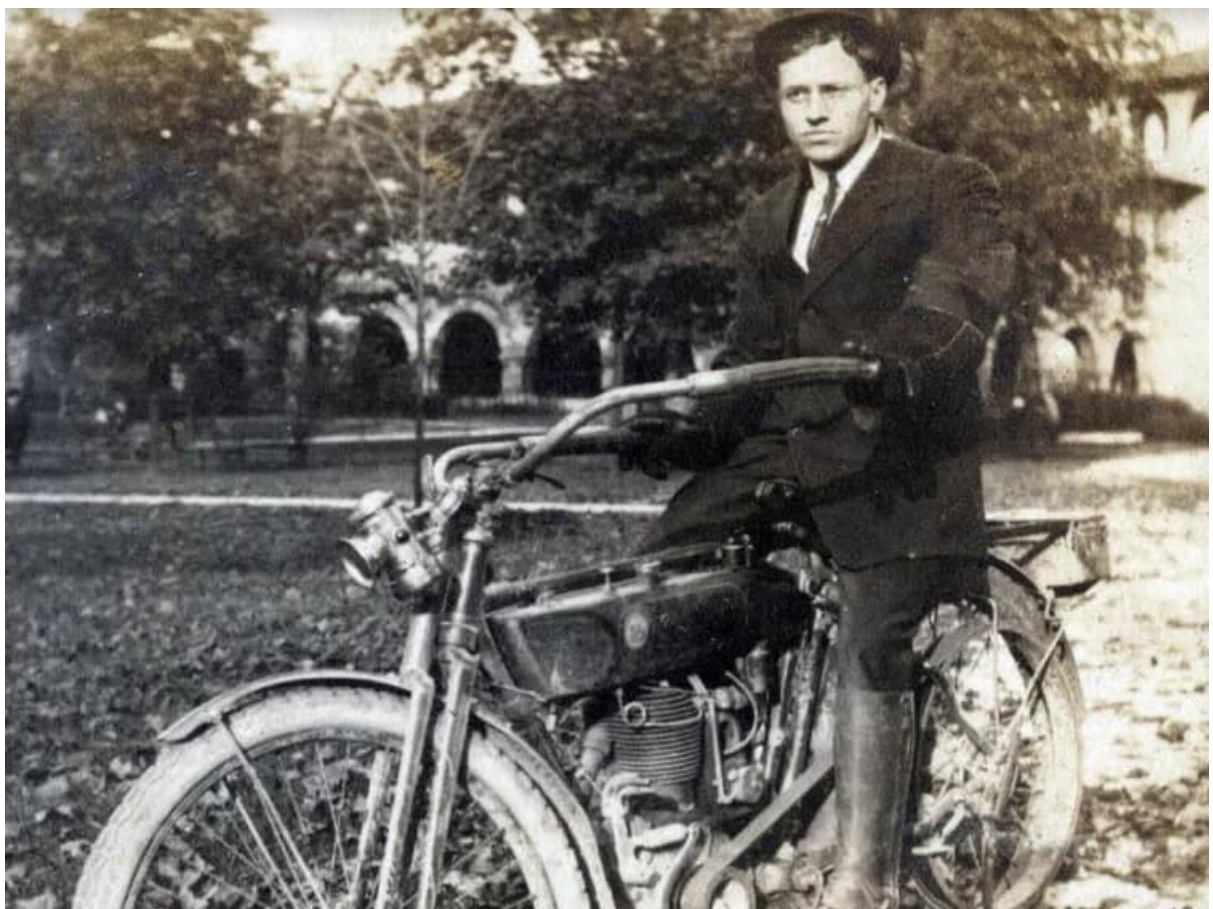






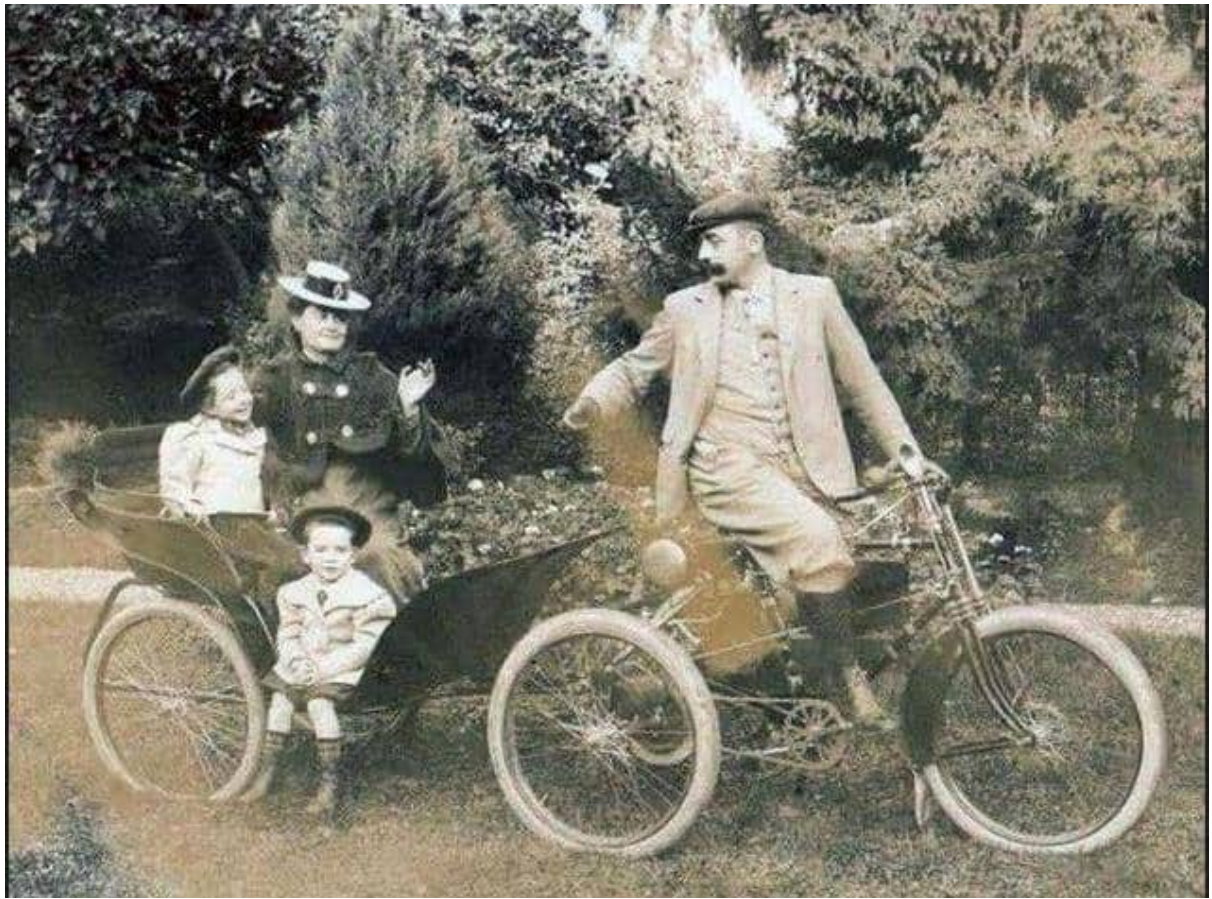


















“An unforeseen breakdown. To become engaged it’s good to hurry—parents must be asked for the one we wish to marry.” (Apologies to French speakers, not least Fanfan, for the clumsy translation.)



The French seem to have been worried about the effect of breakdowns on engagements (and, yet again, sorry for the schoolboy translation): “Crack! No way to move forward—what will my fiancée say? Damn this breakdown, you will destroy my happiness!”



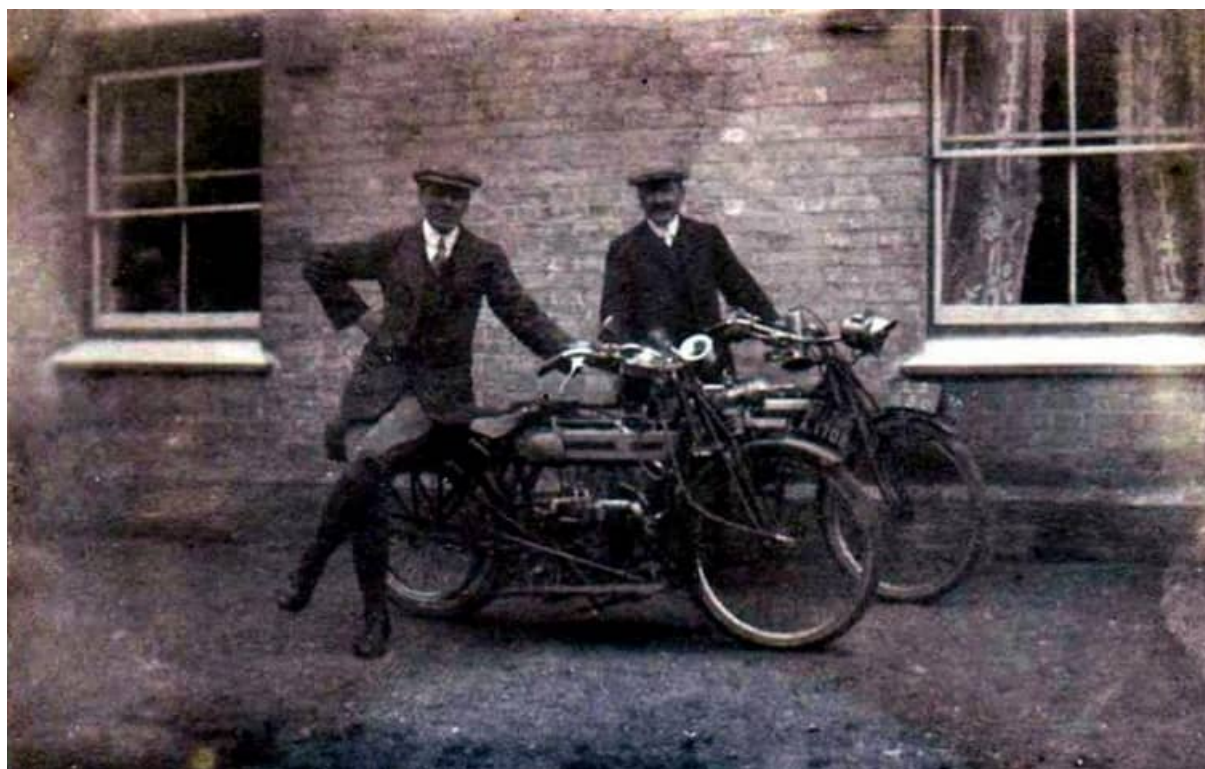


Another fine studio pose, but this enthusiast seems to be having more luck with his lady love.

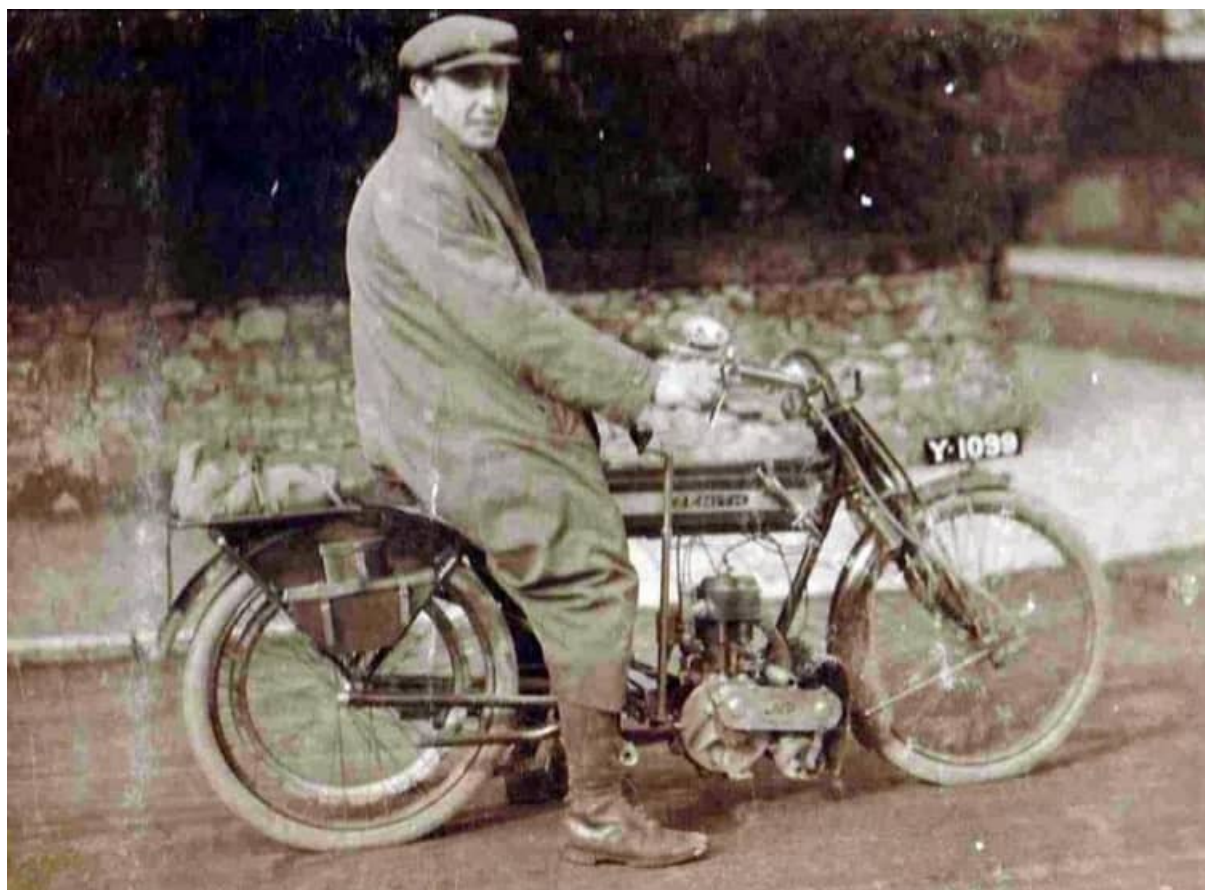








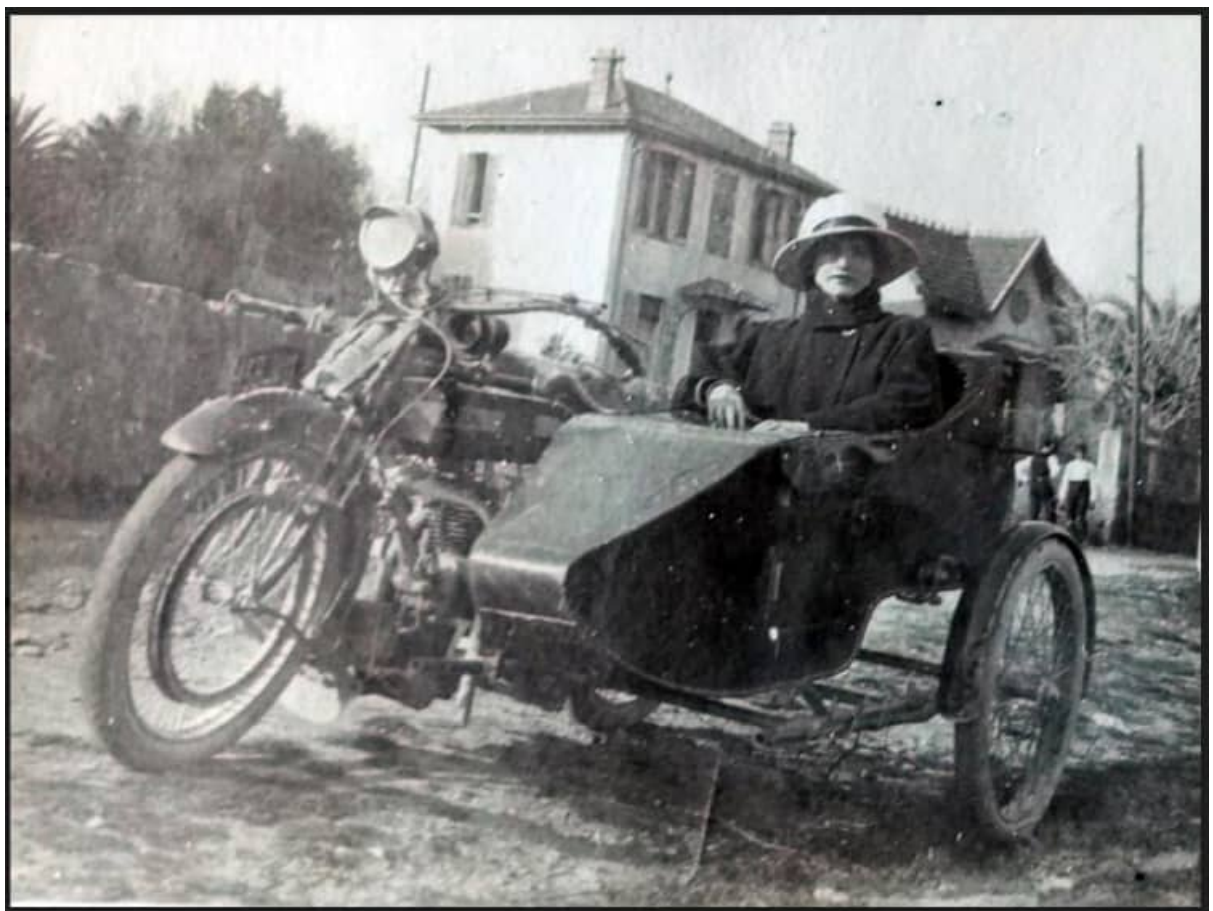
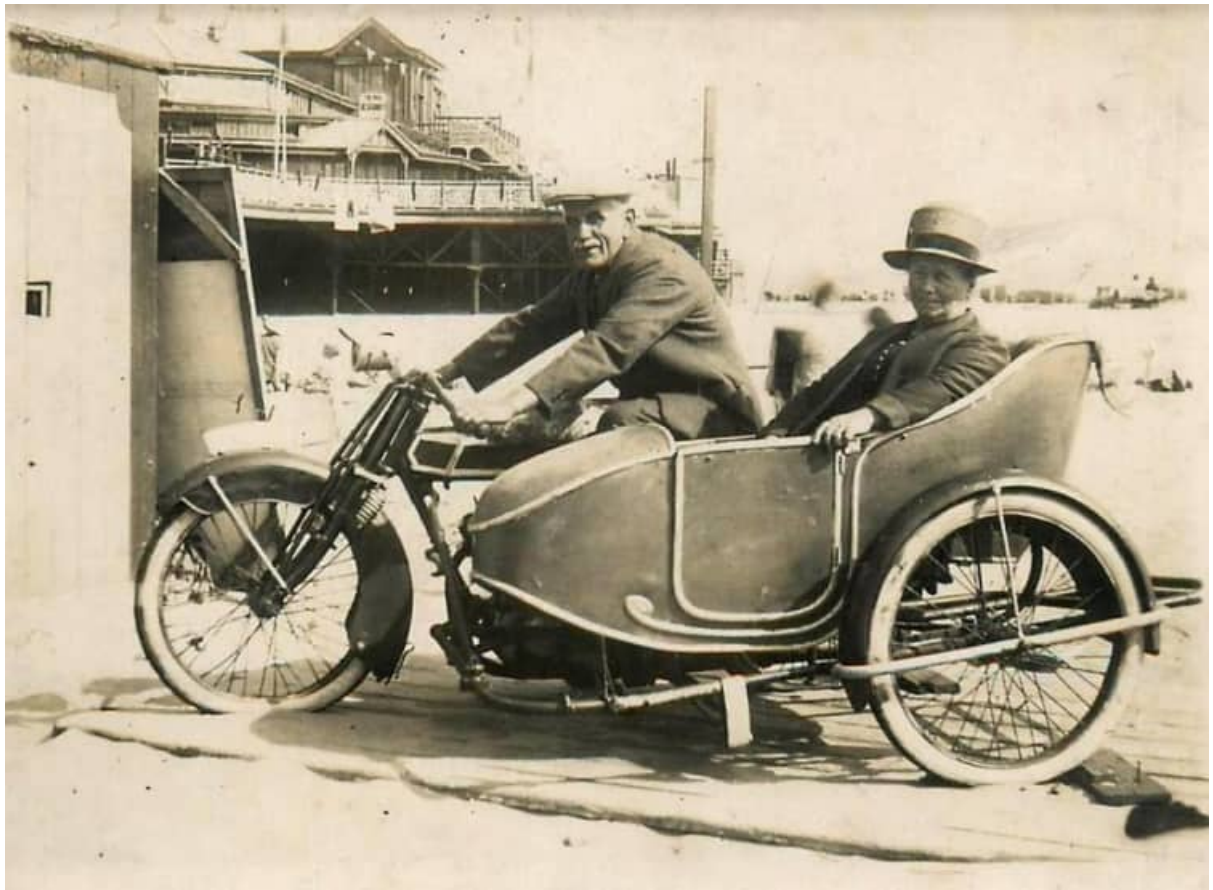






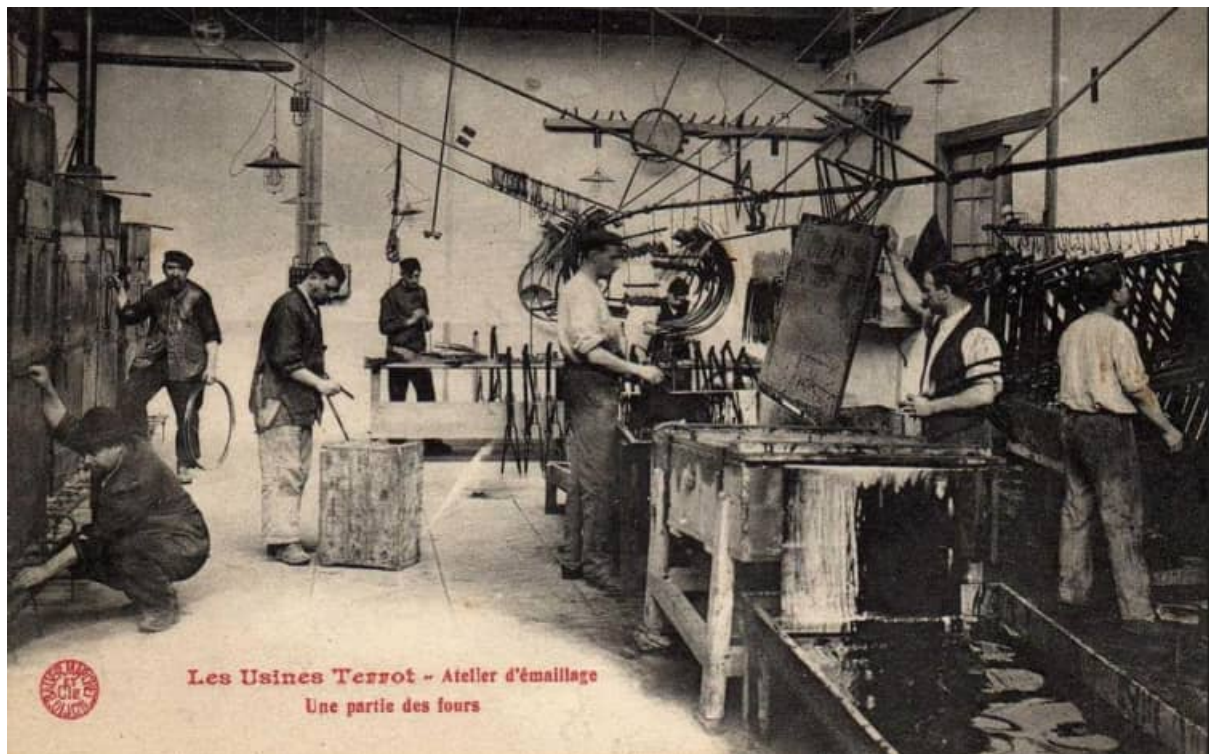












This pic, and the next two, are of the Terrot factory which was at one point the biggest in France. The marque was established in 1901—these snaps date from 1902—and survived into the sixties.







Terrot fielded a formidable factory racing team.



This postcard depicts the start of a shift at the DeDion Bouton factory.



The Mill at Guys Clift near Coventry where Triumph Cycles and Motors — the Best British Workmanship can produce — are made.

...and here's an equally historic site: Triumph's original home in Coventry (until 1940 when noisy neighbours from the Luftwaffe inspired to a move to Meriden).





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ST<sup>E</sup> A<sup>M</sup>E DES PÉTROLES JUPITER, 58, RUE LA BOËTIE - PARIS (8<sup>E</sup>)



*Edition du Pneu Hutchinson*

**LES CHAMPIONS DU PNEU HUTCHINSON**  
**M<sup>L</sup>LE YVONNE DEGRAÏNE ET M. BLAUSEUR SUR SUNBEAM ET PNEU HUTCHINSON**

Clearly a keen motor cyclist, Yvonne Degraïne was an Olympic (100-metre) swimmer.



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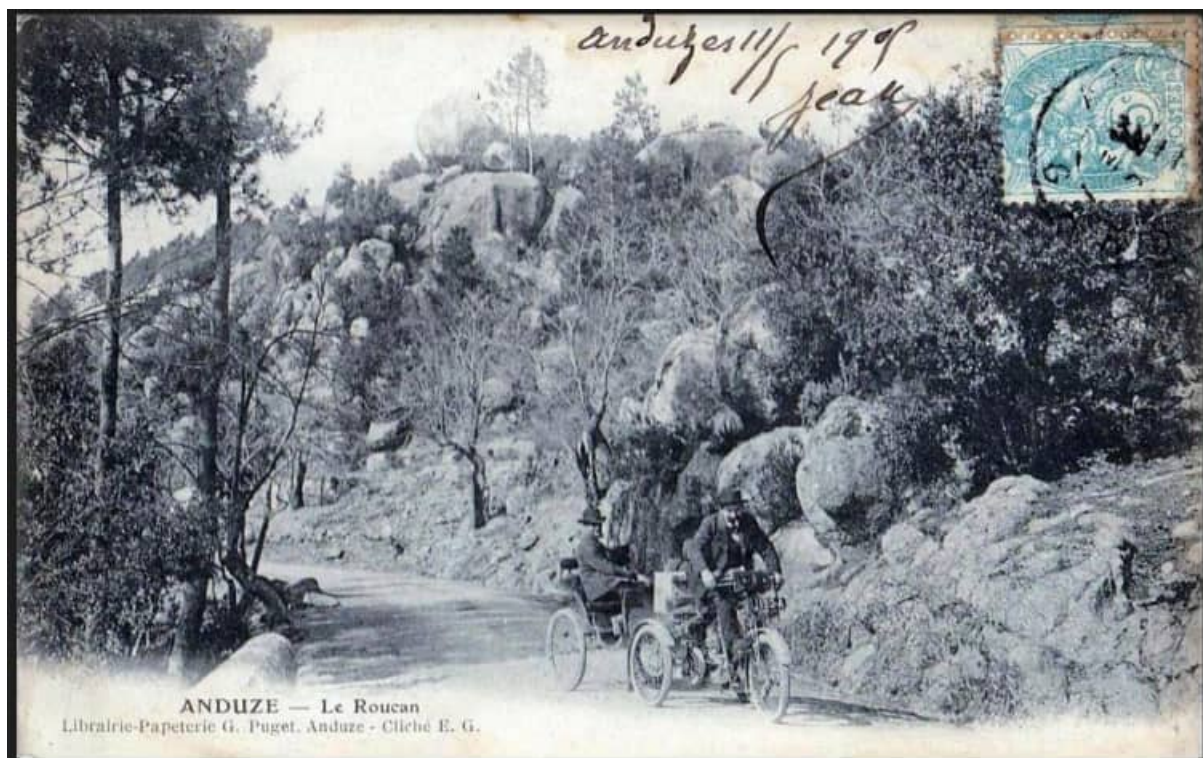
Yes, there was a time when Japanese enthusiasts bought their motor cycles from Coventry.

Nouveaux pour Vieillards et Infirmes  
 Tricycles à moteur 1 HP, 1 place, très pratiques. Prix 250

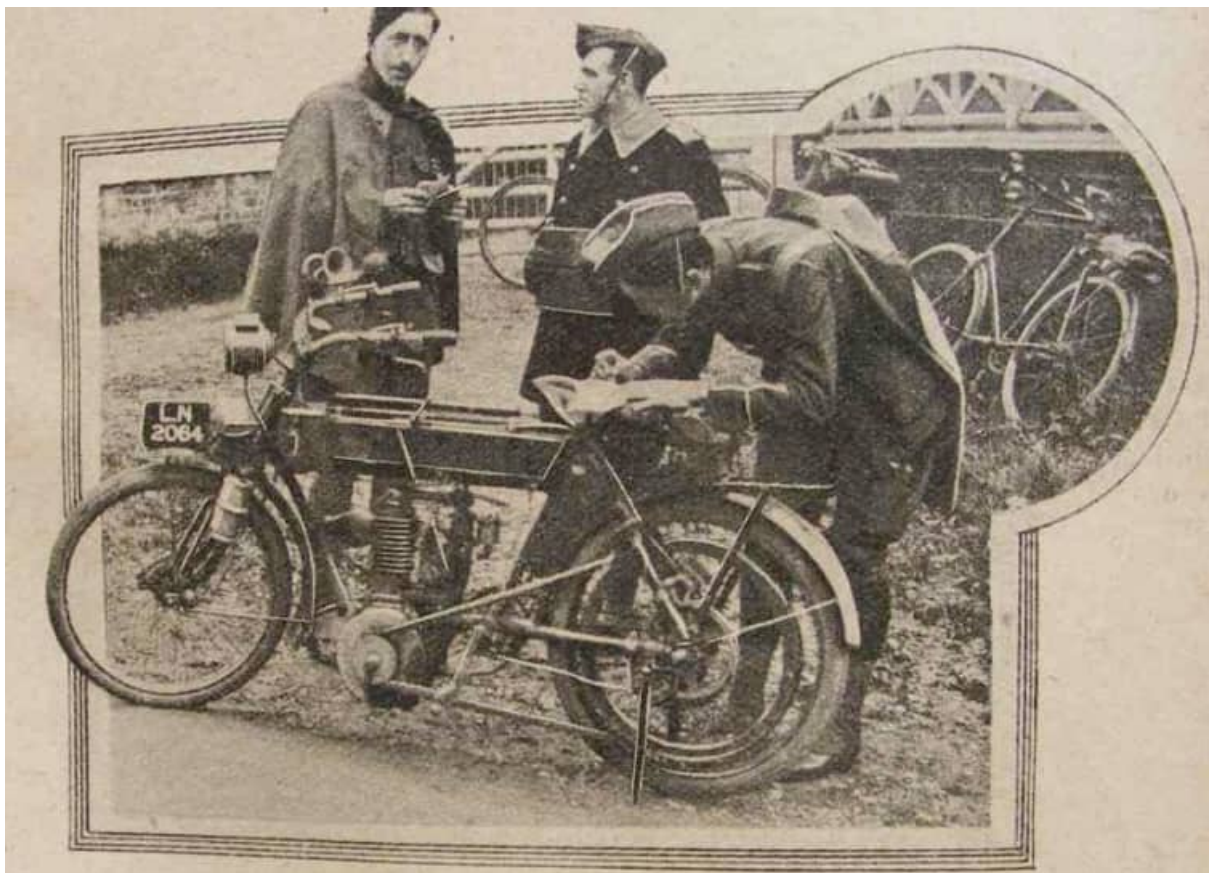


ETABLISSEMENTS L. TOURNOIS  
 Fabrique de Tricycles en tous genres et de Voitures pour infirmes et Malades.  
 6, Rue de Bourgoigne, Orléans









In the years before the Great War a number of enthusiasts volunteered to take their bikes to Army manoeuvres to demonstrate their practicality. This snap dates back to 1910.



The uniform, which seems short of insignia, looks British but the 'NSW' on the number plate presumably indicates New South Wales. In any case, this squaddy's lady friend looks pleased to be on his flapper bracket.

## 1914 1918 FIRST WORLD WAR

Here's a selection of images of motor cycles and the chaps who rode them in the Great War. Many of them are courtesy of my chum Francois; you'll find many more WW1 pics in his *Images of Yesteryear* via the main menu.





There was quite a rush to sign the special enlistment forms. The duty of a dispatch rider is very dangerous, but nobody thinks of self now.

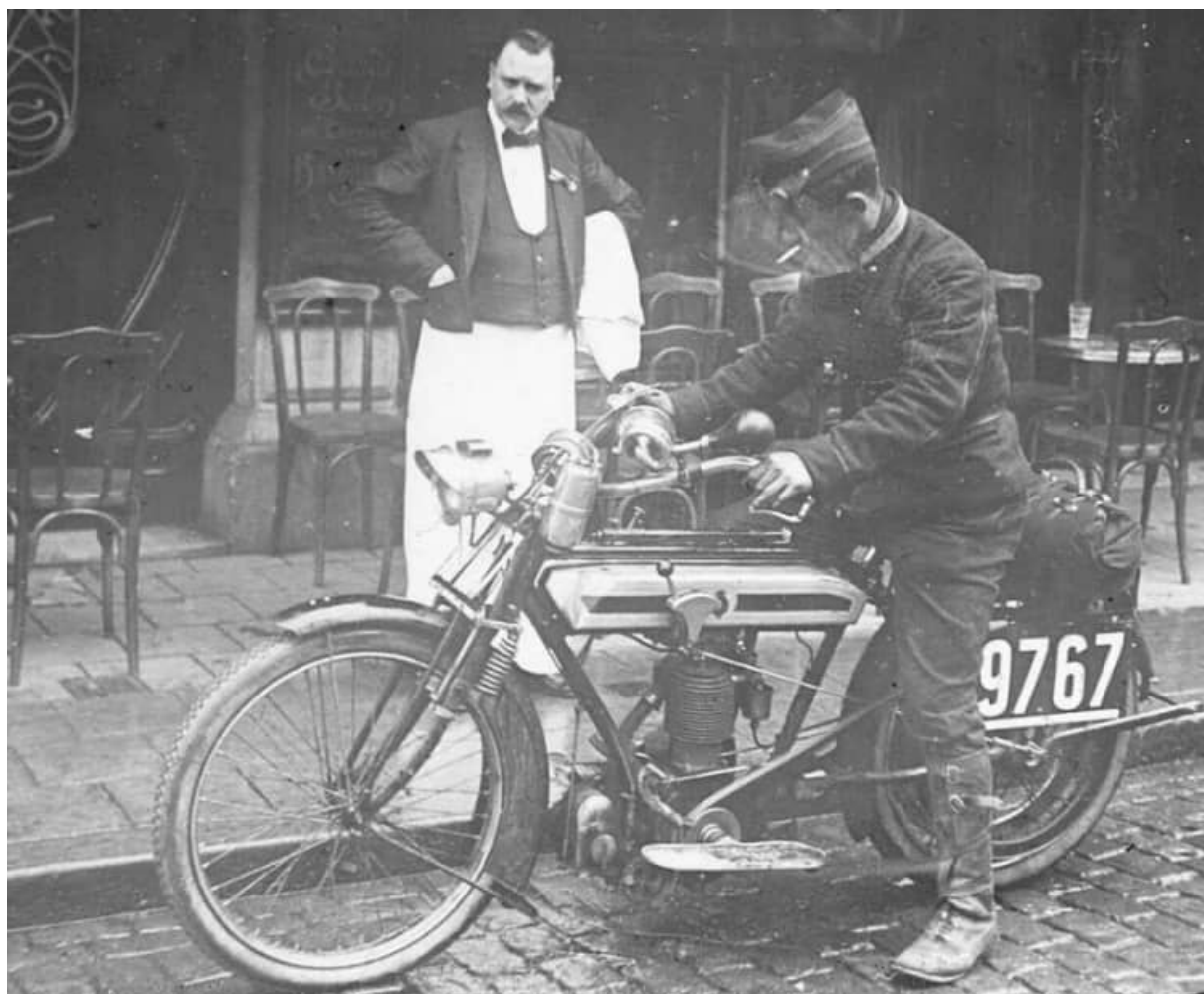






The uniformed Belgian doesn't look much older than the nipper on the bike.

















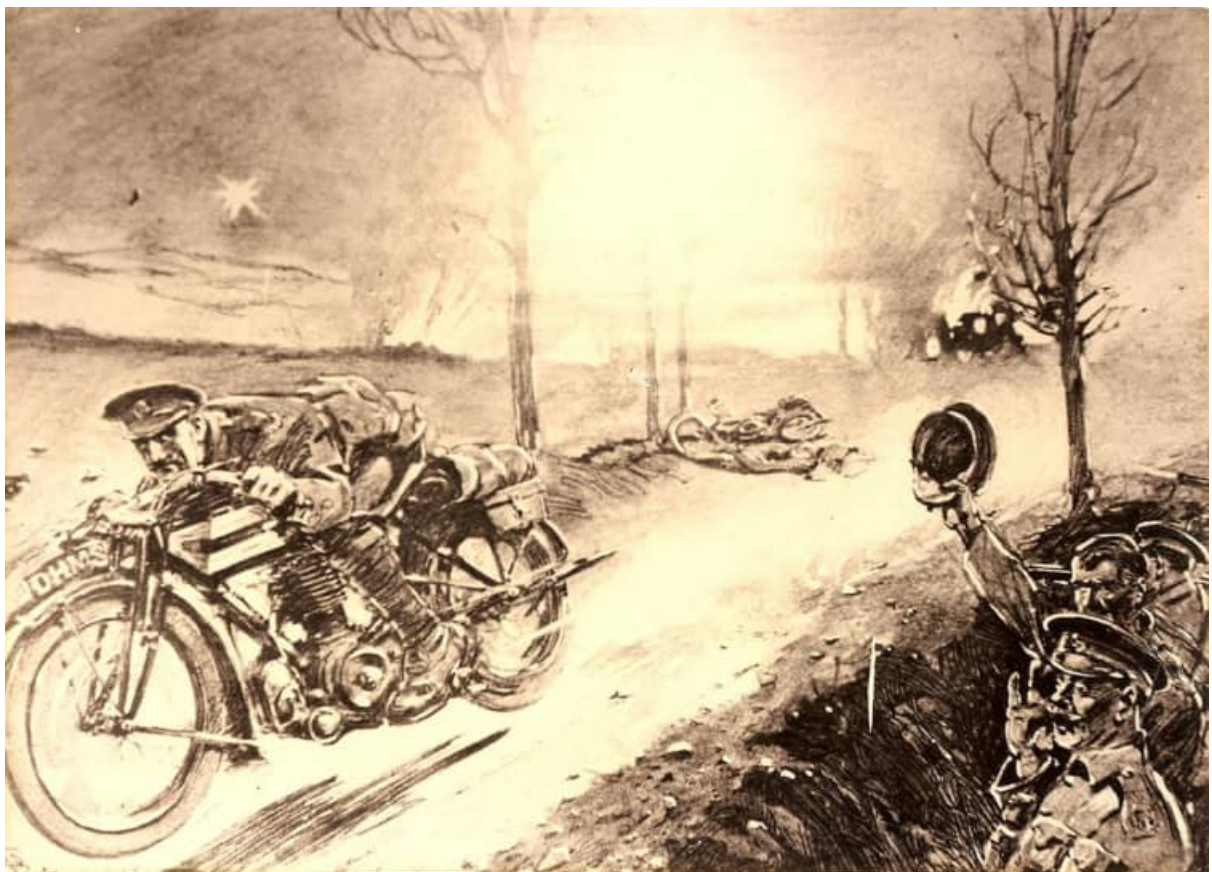
Two nicely staged pics of a poilu who's clearly involved in laying phone lines. If you look closely you'll see, in place of the 'Triumph' legend on his Model H, a neatly painted *Madeleine*. I hope he made it through to return to his *Madeleine*.



These Poiluts are mounted on Beezas; the dependability of British bikes made a lasting impression on our allies.







You couldn't get more British than a Tommy on a 'Trusty' Triumph...



### Motorradfahrer.

Hufklirren auf den Steinen	Was! denen uns ergeben?
Und heißes Kopfgeschmauf!	Das fällt uns gar nicht ein.
Ha, vier's gegen einen!	Wir müßten beide eben
Nun lauf, mein Rad, nun lauf!	Von deutscher Art nicht sein.
Sie möchten gern mich packen,	Vier gegen einen reiten
Vorwärts, mein gutes Rad,	Ist unsrer Feinde Brauch.
Hilf mir von den Kosaken	So geht's in diesen Zeiten,
Als wackrer Kamrad.	Lieb Vaterland, dir auch.

U. M.

...and here's an equally

stirring card of a Jerry. The poem translates, extremely loosely, as:

"Motorcyclist

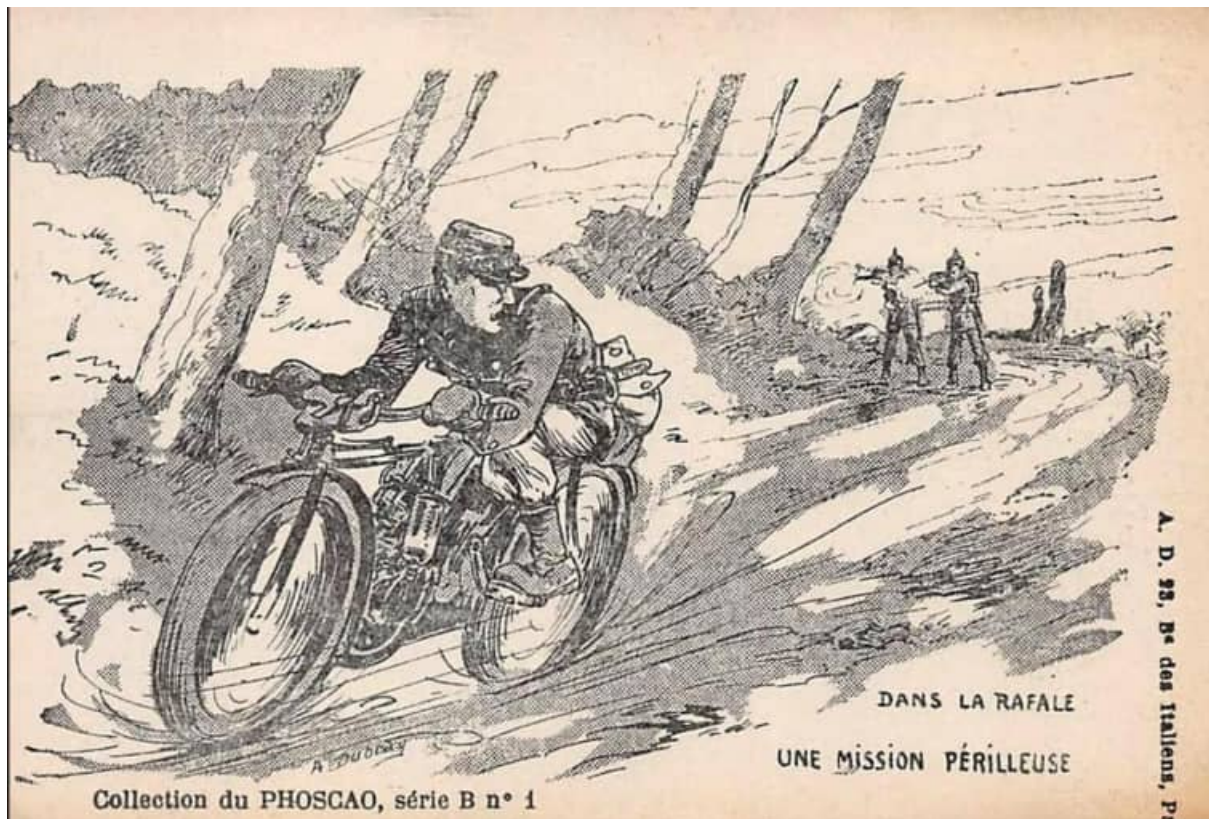
*Howling along the track—hot steed snorting! ha, four against one...move, bike, move!*

*They're after me! Onward, trusty steed, get me out of this my faithful comrade.*

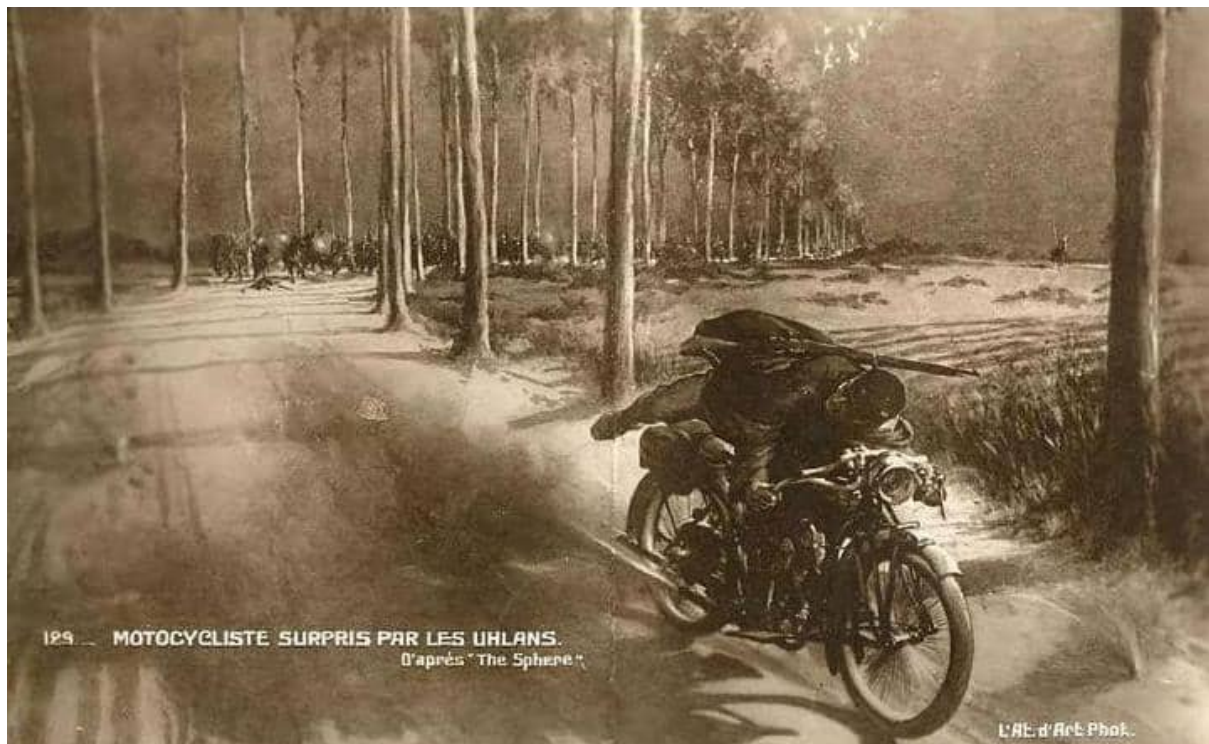
*Will we surrender? Not a chance. We both have German blood in our veins!*

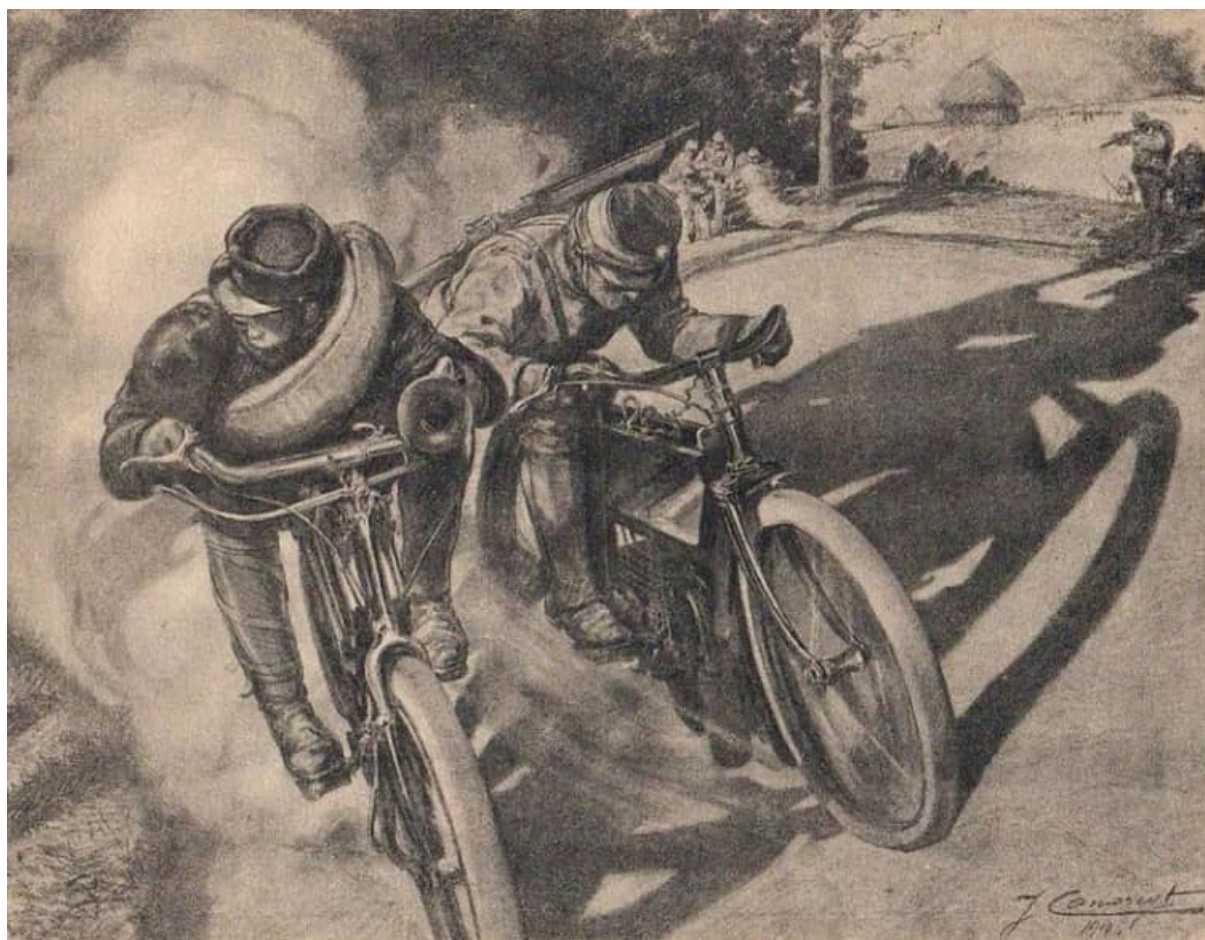
*Four against one. That's the way our enemies like it. That's the way it goes nowadays for you too, my beloved fatherland."*





Here's a poillut in similar circumstances with three more to follow.











Un Motocycliste tuant ou blessant 6 allemands















*Gallaher's Cigarettes*



**MOTOR-CYCLIST DESPATCH RIDERS.**



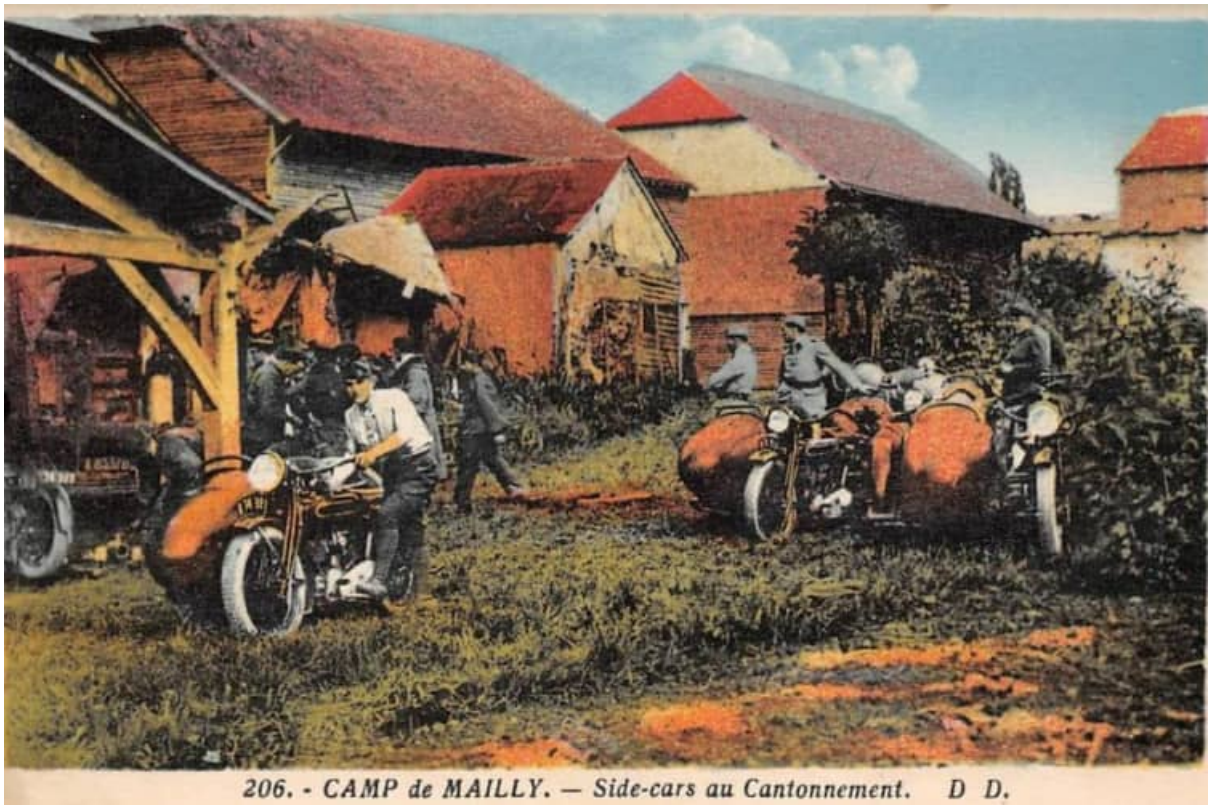




BRITISH MOTOR CYCLE

DESPATCH RIDERS

3275-14

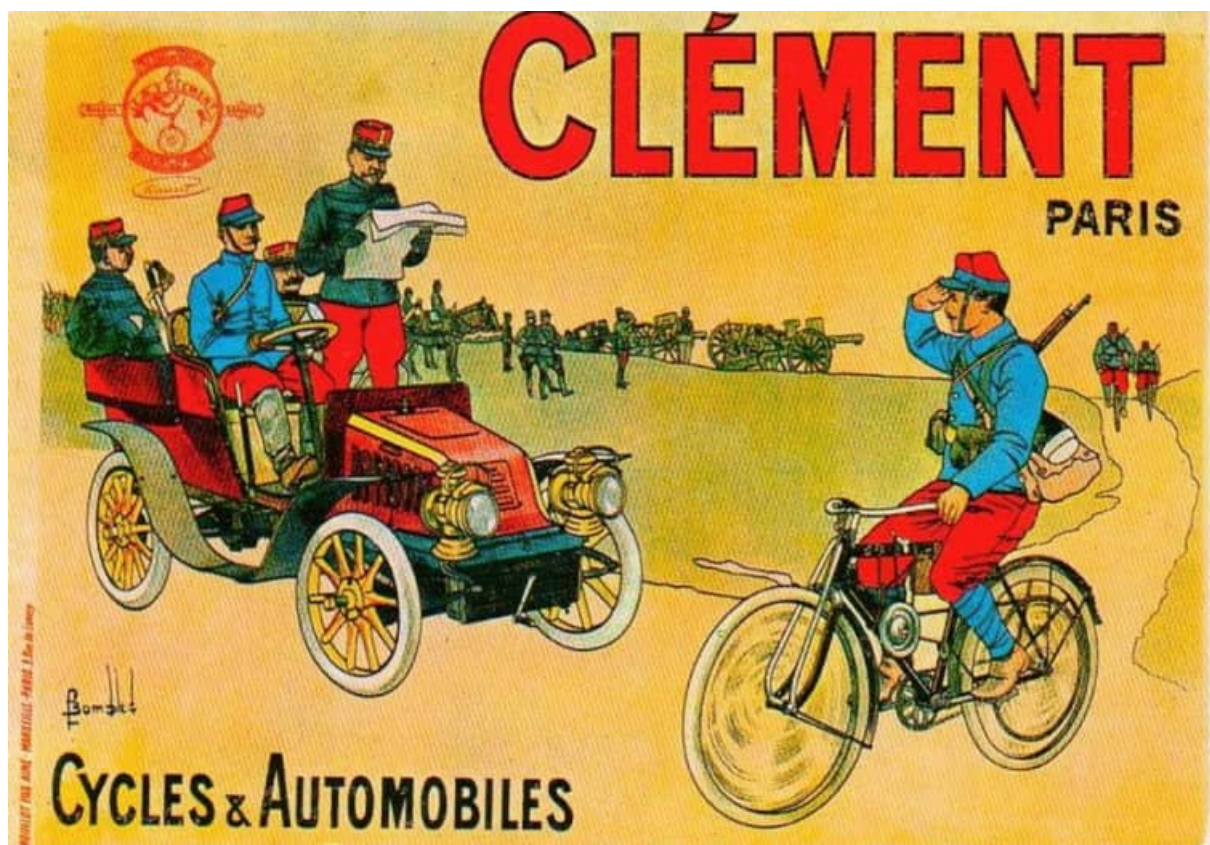


206. - CAMP de MAILLY. — Side-cars au Cantonnement. D D.





This is rather poignant; a pedalling poillut pays his respect to the French equivalent of Chelsea pensioners; they'd have won their spurs in the Franco-Prussian war that had left a generation of young Frenchmen eager for a rematch.



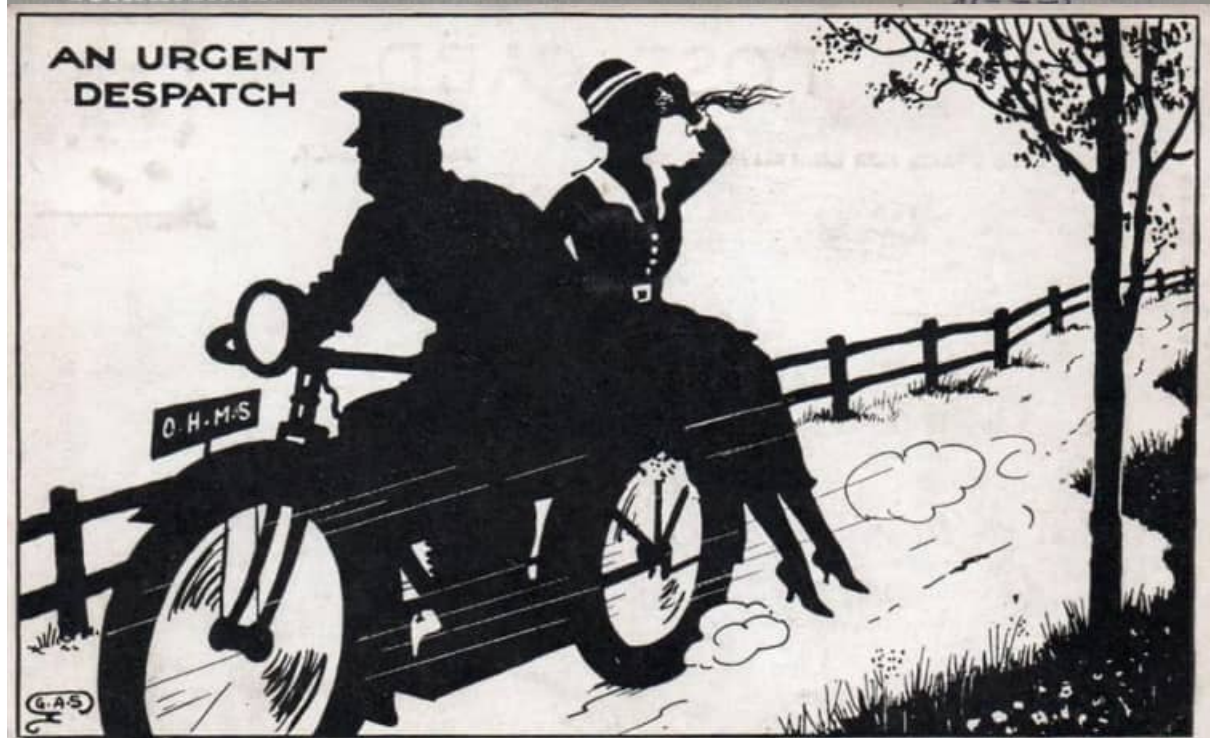




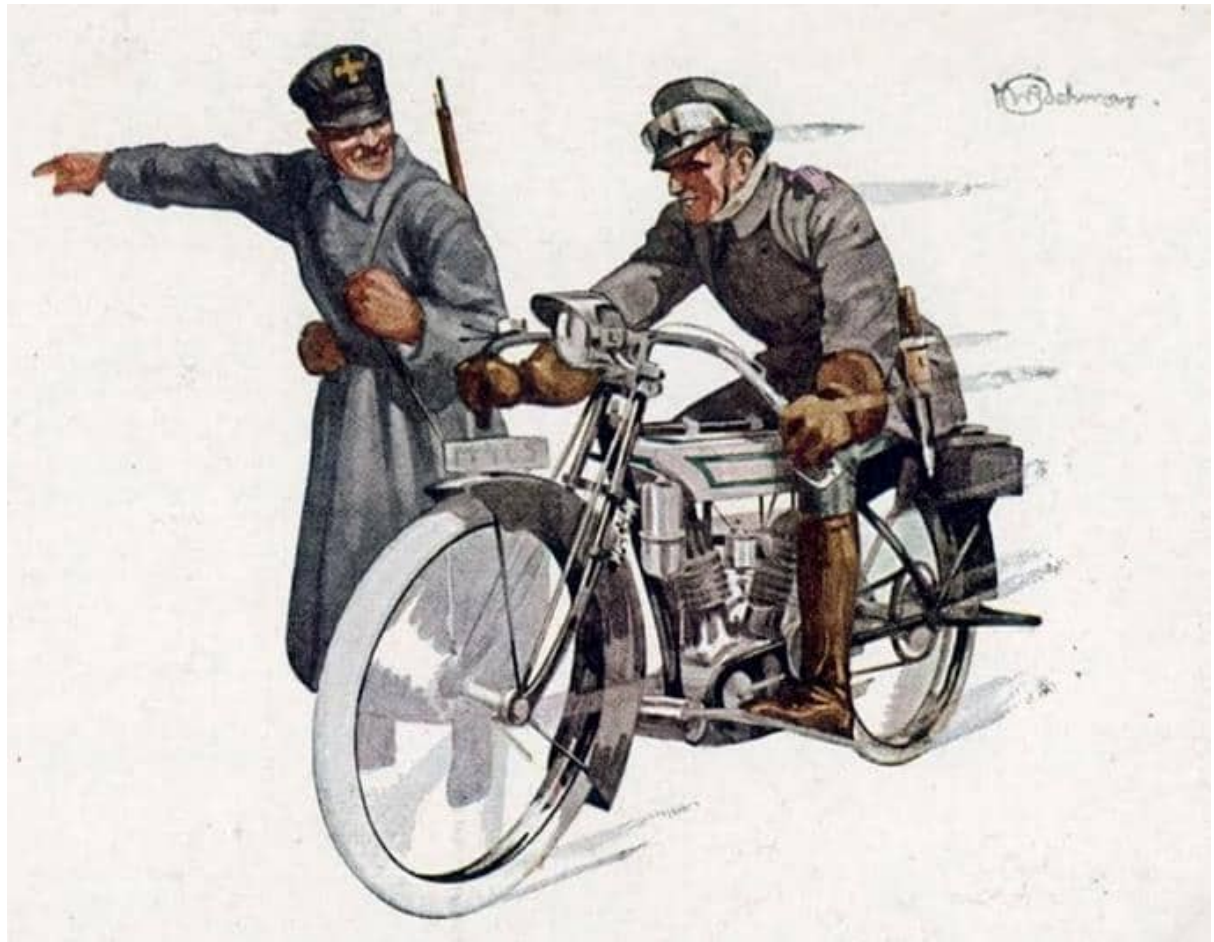
**TERROT & C<sup>IE</sup>.**



Continental











V.P.F.  
DEPOSE

**ARMÉE BELGE**

Bataillon cycliste

Un sergent, estafette motocycliste





14e serie — 8. - GUERRE 1914  
Motocyclette d'un belge brisée par un obus

“A Belgian’s bike smashed by a shell.”

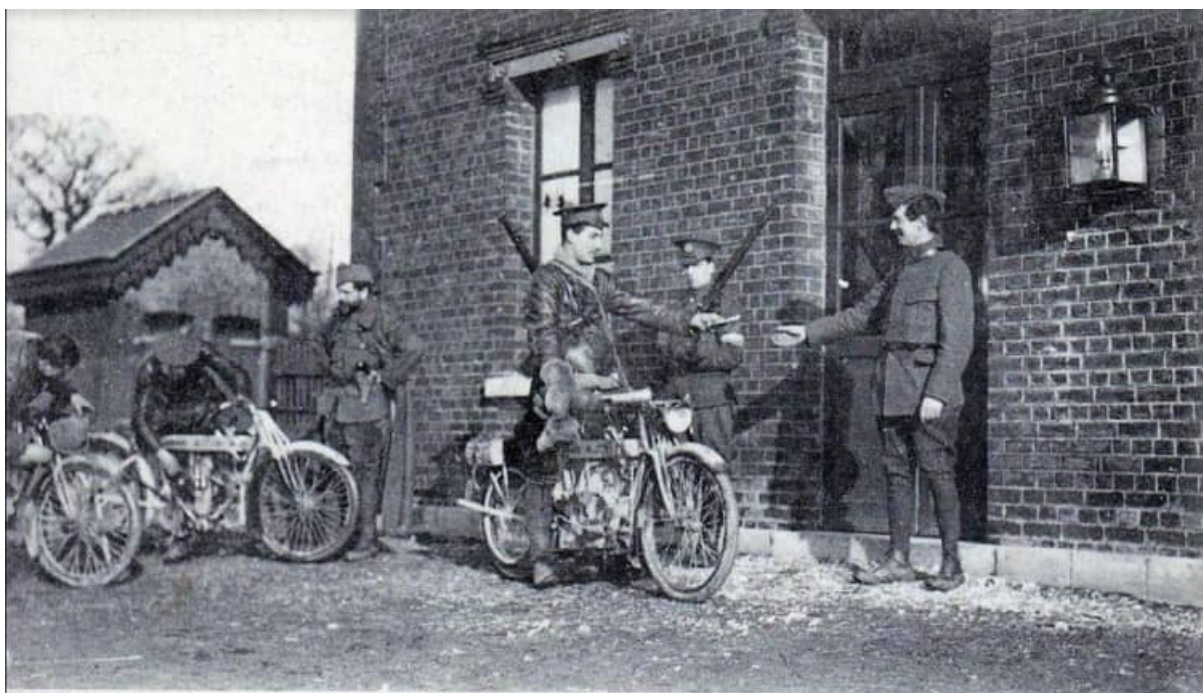




This image bears the label: "Florina Dardanelles".







1914-15... L'Armée Anglaise  
dans le Pas-de-Calais

1914-15... The British army in the  
Pas-de-Calais

21-10-15









The distinctive fuel tank and springers make the Wanderer easy to identify.



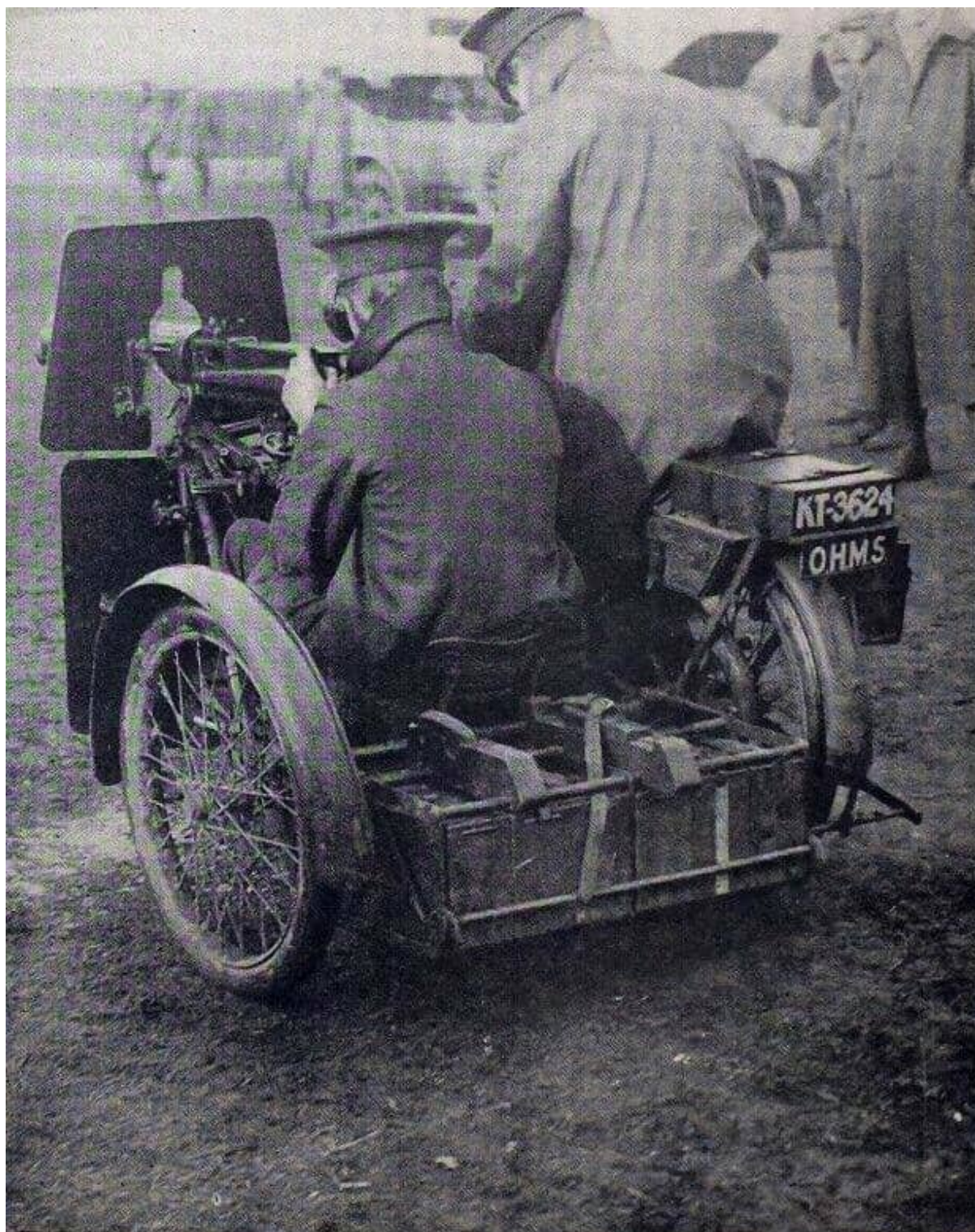


# The Illustrated War News.



*Photo. News Illustrations.*

AS USED ALSO BY THE GERMANS: A MOTOR-CYCLE WITH A SIDE-CAR MACHINE-GUN (A WEAPON OF THE NEW BRITISH CORPS).



Rear view of the Maxim-carrying motor-cycle, showing method of stowing the ammunition beneath the gunner's seat.

*Copyright.*











By war's end the US had developed specialised AA combos. This Indian is armed with a modified Colt-Browning marketed as a Marlin.



A Russian combo in a nicely posed anti-aircraft propaganda pic, and here are some more Russian DRs...



These Russian machine gunners are from the 39th Tomsk regiment.



This combo, pictured in 1915, is crewed by Tommies.





...and here's the opposition.



...More of the same.



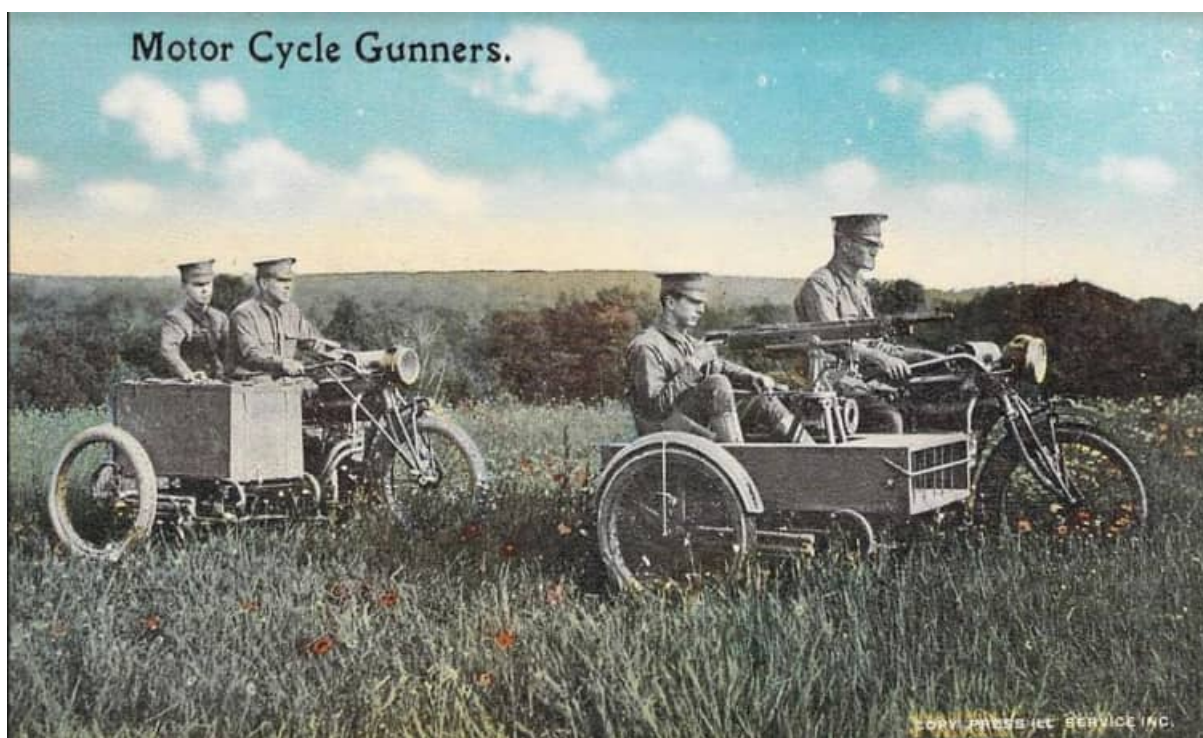




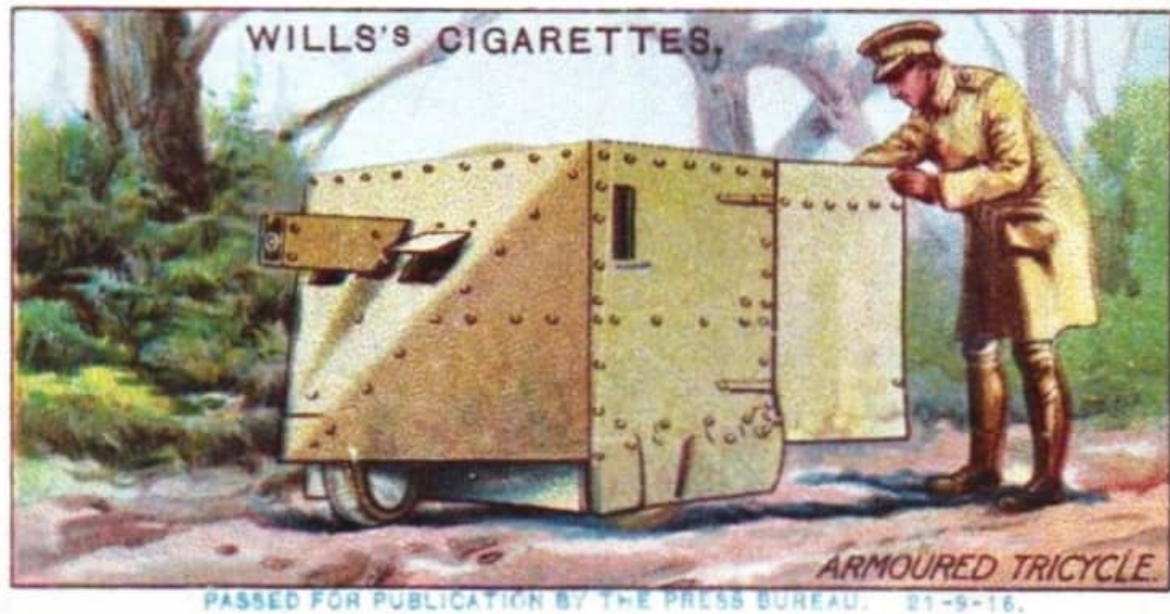
This armoured sidecar was pictured in 1914. Assault combos clearly had no future in the mud of the western front, which was good news for the unarmoured rider.



This machine-gun unit, with its Triumph-mounted Rupert, was going into action in 1918.







42

### WAR INCIDENTS

A SERIES OF 50

#### MOTOR DESPATCH RIDERS

One of the difficulties of the present war was that of maintaining communication along a battle-front of 250 miles. Despatch-riders on horseback would have been comparatively useless. Resort has therefore been made to the motorcycle, a mode of transit which, though beset with perils, has proved of inestimable value.

#### WILLS'S SPECIALITIES.

CAPSTAN, Navy Cut or Plug  
 VICE REGAL, Mixture.  
 RIGDON CUT, Flax.  
 PENNANT, for Pipe Smoking.  
 All highly recommended.

ALBUMS FOR THESE PICTURE CARDS CAN BE OBTAINED AT EACH THROUGH ALL TOBACCONISTS.

This image is from a cigarette card published in 1915.



Choose sidebar display



ALBUMS FOR THESE PICTURE CARDS CAN BE OBTAINED

## 43 WAR INCIDENTS

A SERIES OF 50

### DEATH TO THE UHLANS

A motor-cycle and a machine-gun in combination have proved an effective weapon of war, especially against enemy patrols. By superior speed, such a motor-cycle machine-gun section has overtaken parties of Uhlans where the usual cavalry speed would have failed. Such a section forms a small target but the maxim gun fire is deadly.

### WILLS'S SPECIALITIES.

CAPSTAN, Navy Cut or Plug  
VICE REGAL, Mixture.  
RIBBON CUT, Flake.  
PENNANT, for Pipe or Cigarettes.  
All highly recommended.

AT 1/- EACH THROUGH ALL TOBACCONISTS.

HOME AND COLONIAL WAR PICTURES



THE DESPATCH RIDER







These German DRs are pictured at Avesnes railway station.





This despatch rider pauses by a grave at Verdun in 1916. Note the German observation balloon in the background.











1915: A dispatch rider of the Indian Corps does some fettling at Merville.





1915: British DRs in the Dardanelles prior to the Battle of Gallipoli.



1915: DRs in North Africa.



1916:

DRs in Salonika.





Yes, that Don R is riding a Rudge Multi.



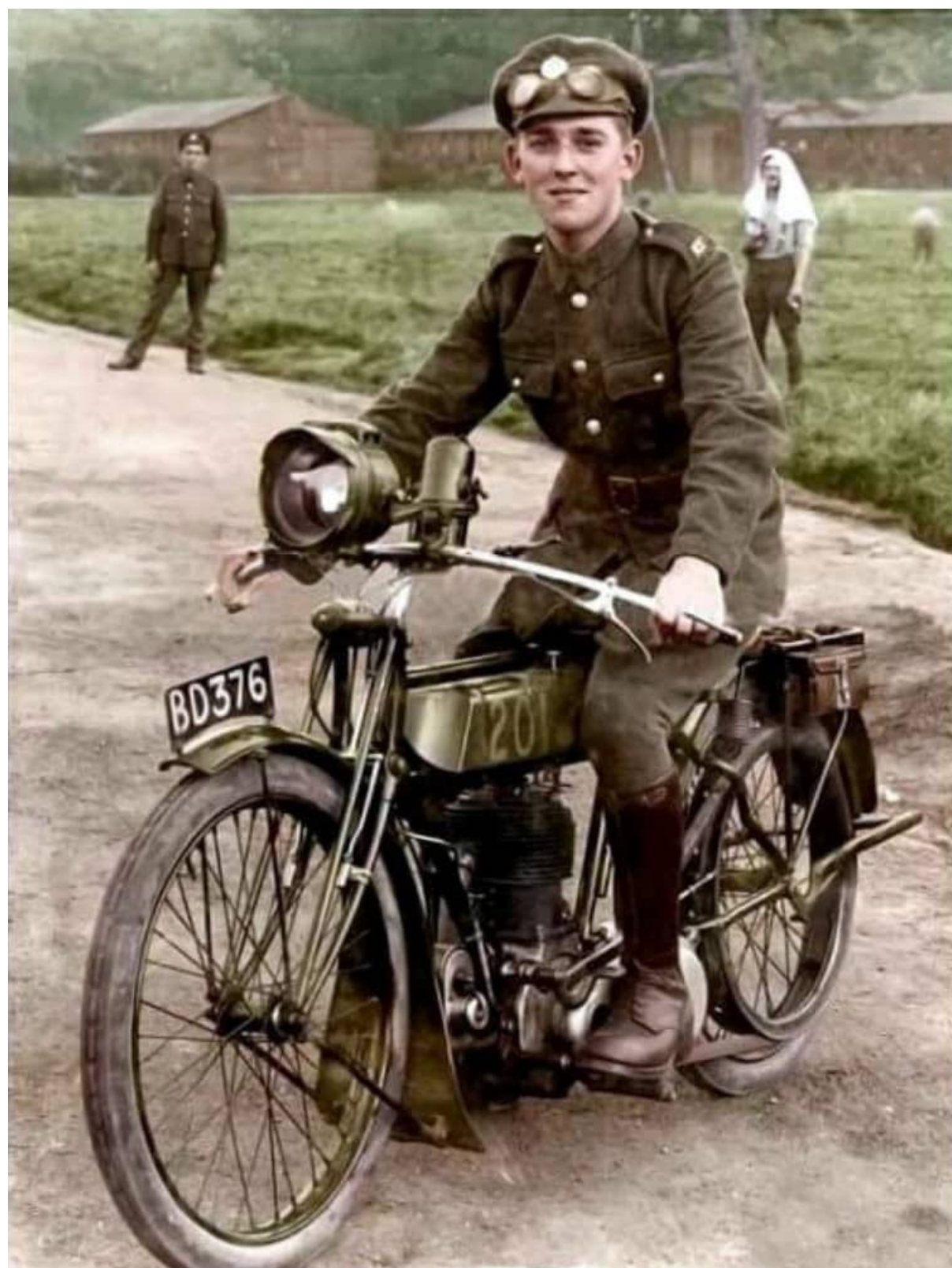
British Despatch Riders

Cyclistes militaires anglais porteurs de dépêches

























This studio portrait dates from 1915...

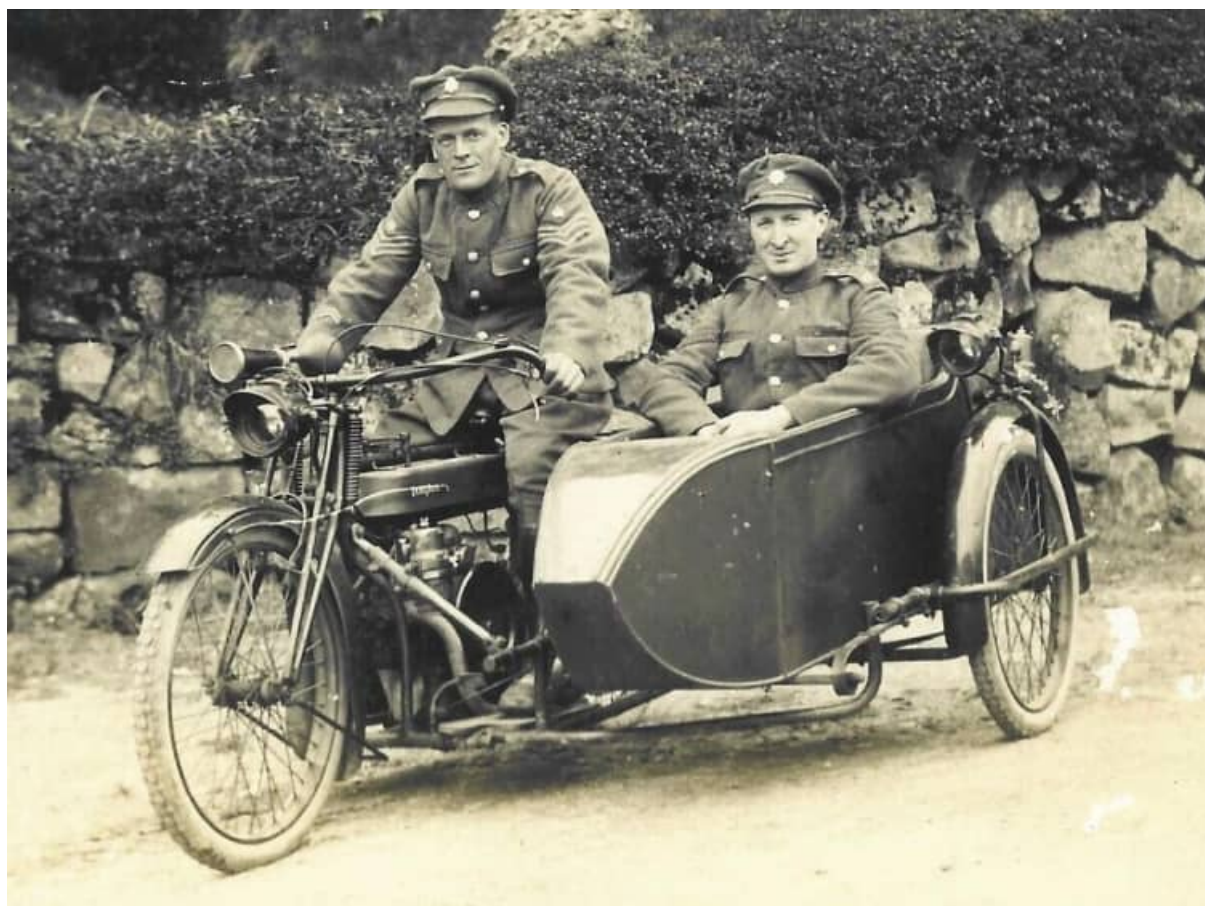


...this garden portrait dates from 1916.



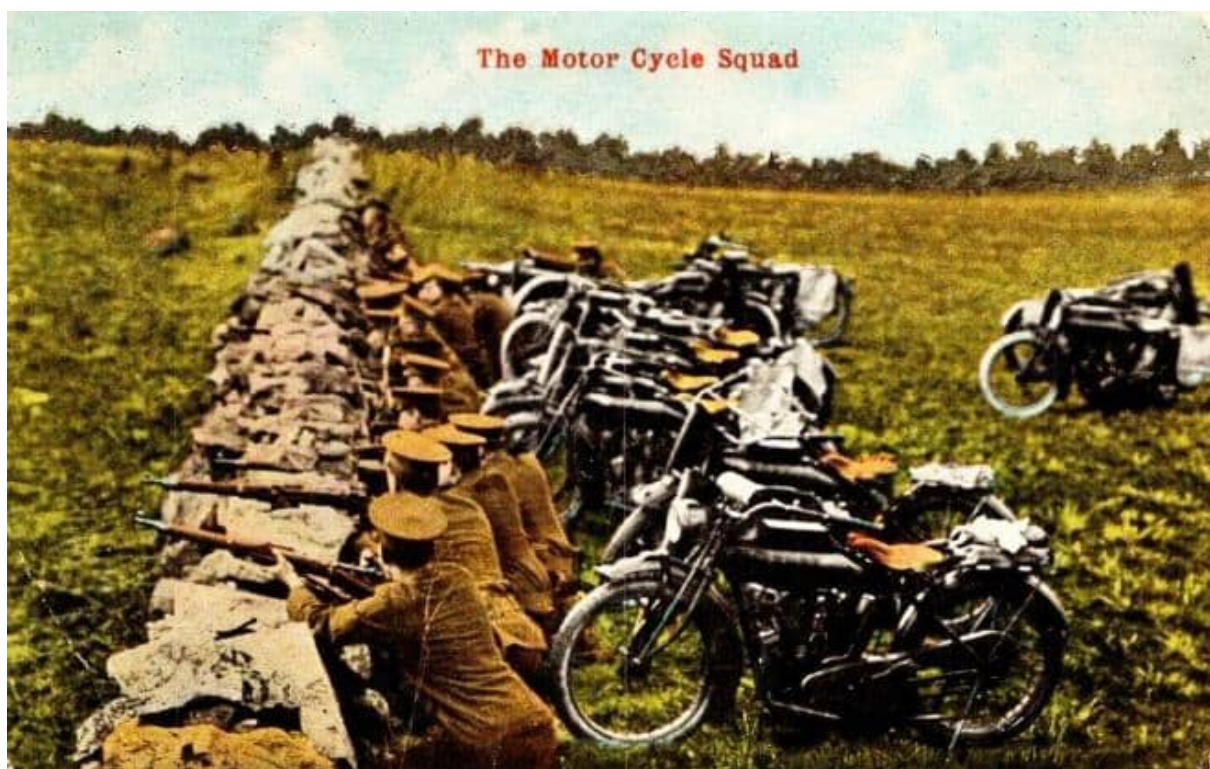
This Tommy and his Trusty Triumph were pictured in Pompey.















Motor cyclist despatch riders attached to the Expeditionary Force awaiting instructions.

[Central News.]

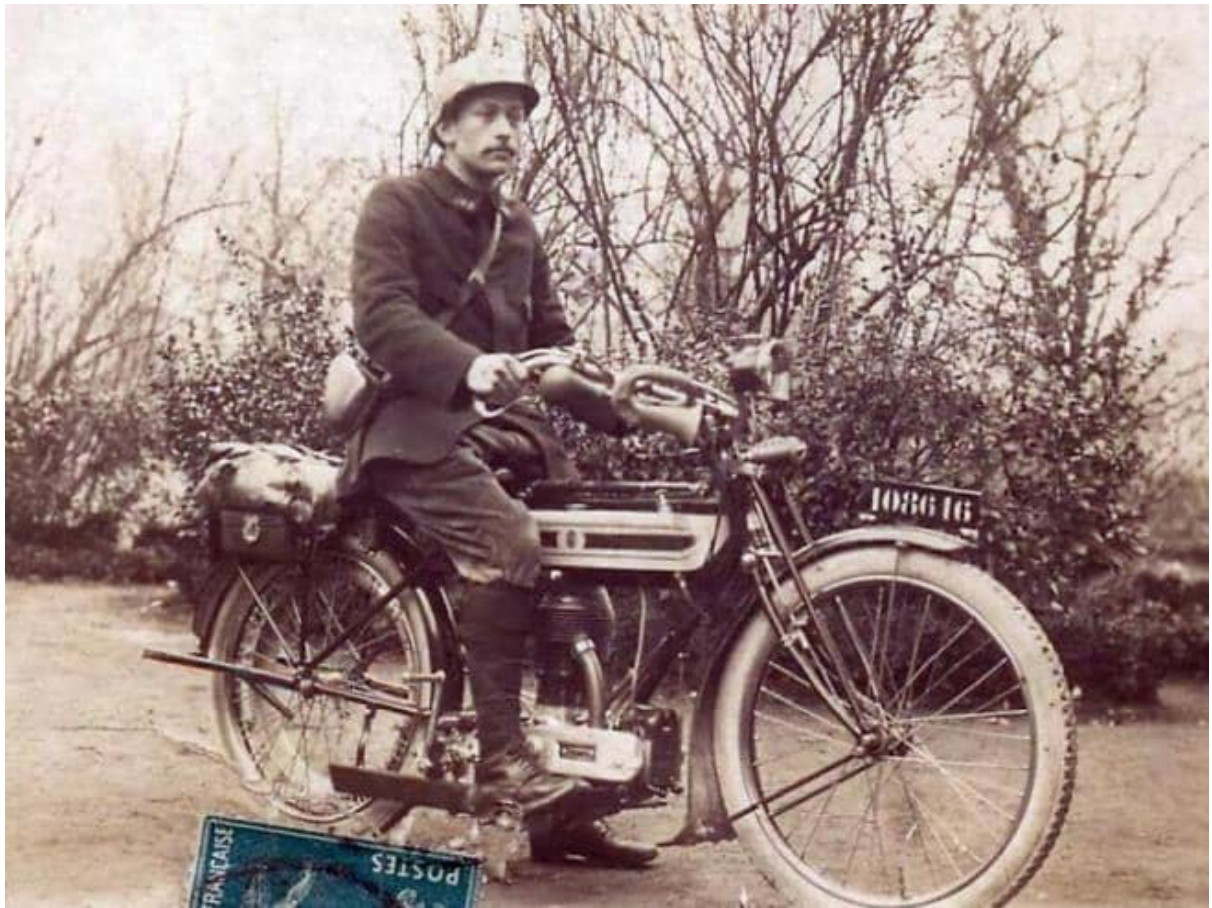


British Despatch Riders

Cyclistes militaires anglais porteurs de dépêches







Poilut onna Triumph.





Tommy onna Norton.



This

Romanian DR seems to be need of air in his rear tyre.





Many Russian DRs rode Sunbeams...



...But these Russians have got their hands on a Scott.





This nicely colourised Russian officer is swanning about in a Harley combo...



...in 1914 this Russian looks happy with his Indian.













Was Ruritania involved in the Great War? A plumed tricorne ghat, forsooth.







For once a name to go with the picture: this poilut is one Henri Berlaudiaux, photographed in 1915.



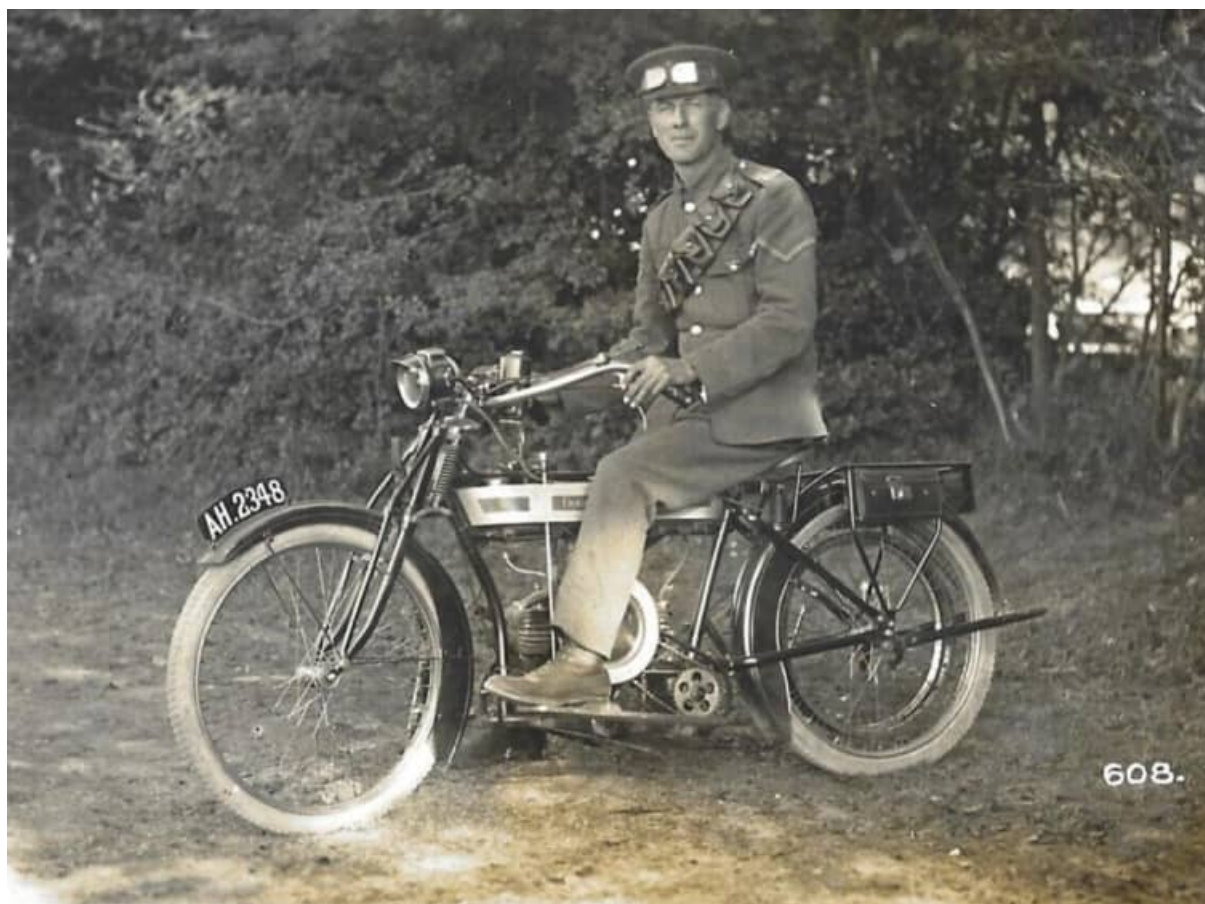






It's 20 April 1918; this is Lieutenant Sidney Gullett of the Australian Army with his Triumph at Nord-Pas de Calais.







These immaculately turned out Germans and that pristine Wanderer indicate that this photographer was nowhere near the front line.









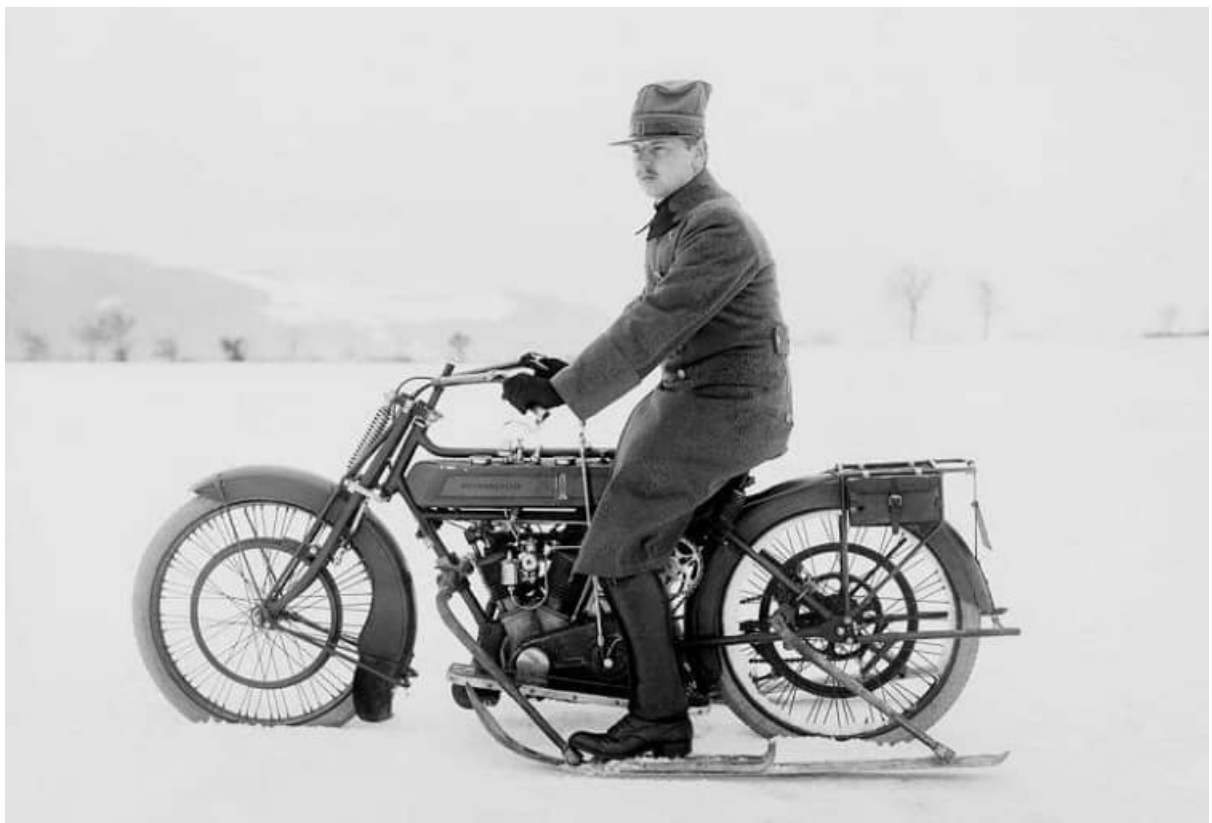
This is Thann

in north-east France, circa 1915.





Vellamo Soderman  
Ley Mierum





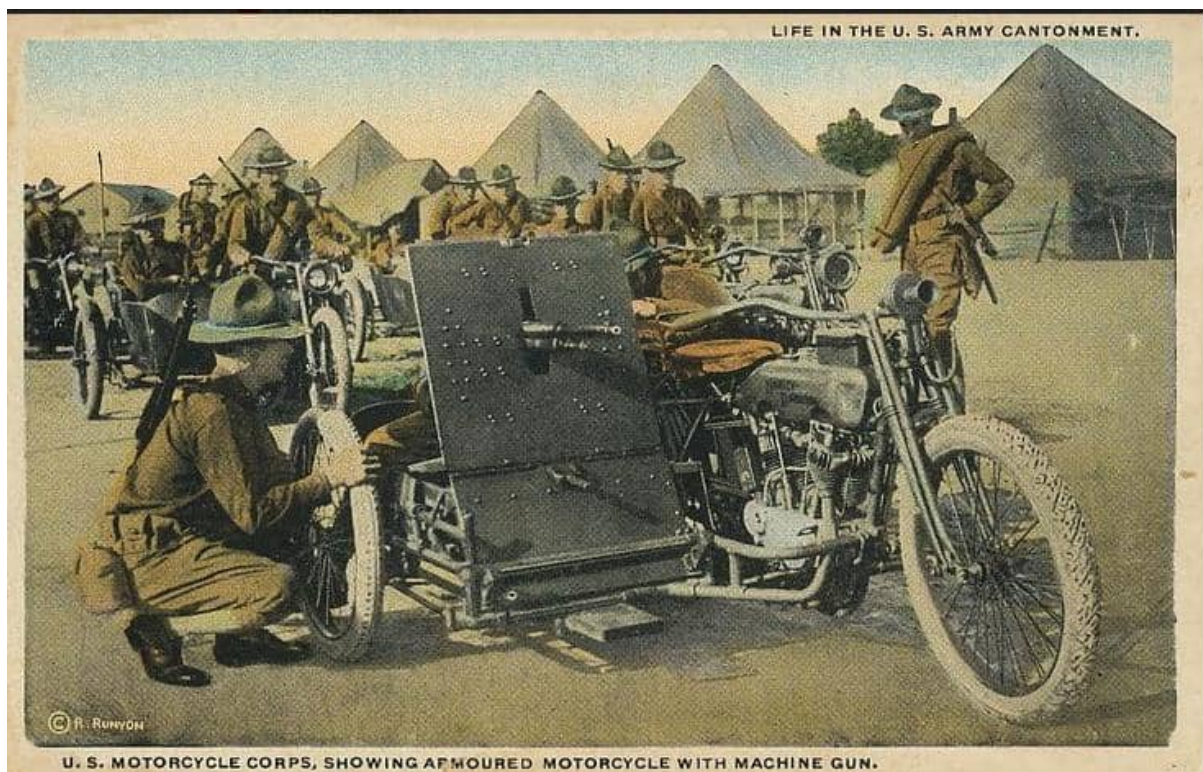


The trainee DRs are pictured in the States in 1917, though those gasmasks look to be somewhat makeshift.



Its 1917 and Harley Davidson went to war. This is a factory training session for the doughboys who would be looking after the DRs' bikes in France.











S. J. D. K.

U. S. Speed Boys at Camp Sherman, Chillicothe, Ohio.

4-2









**L'Armée Américaine en France**

47 - Formation d'un train - Au 1<sup>er</sup> plan, Side car d'un officier  
*In a few minutes Samy will start towards the front of battle*







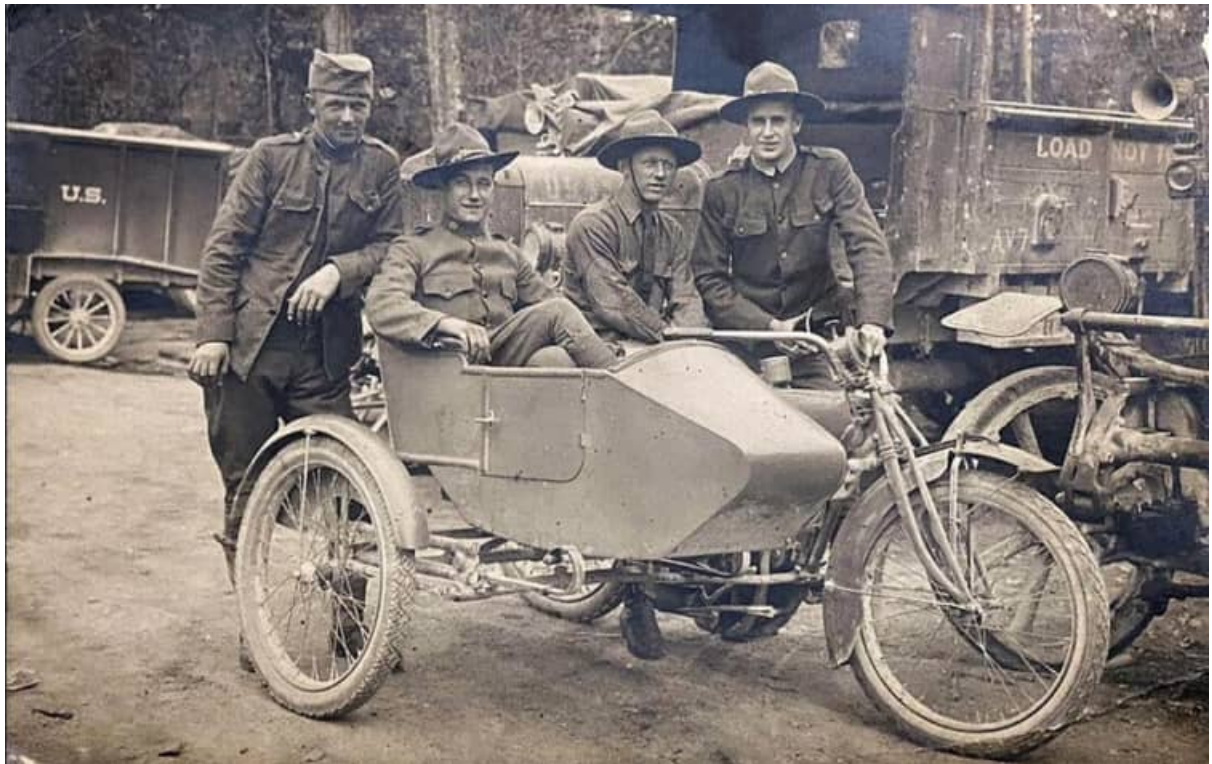
American DRs ride through a shell-torn French village.









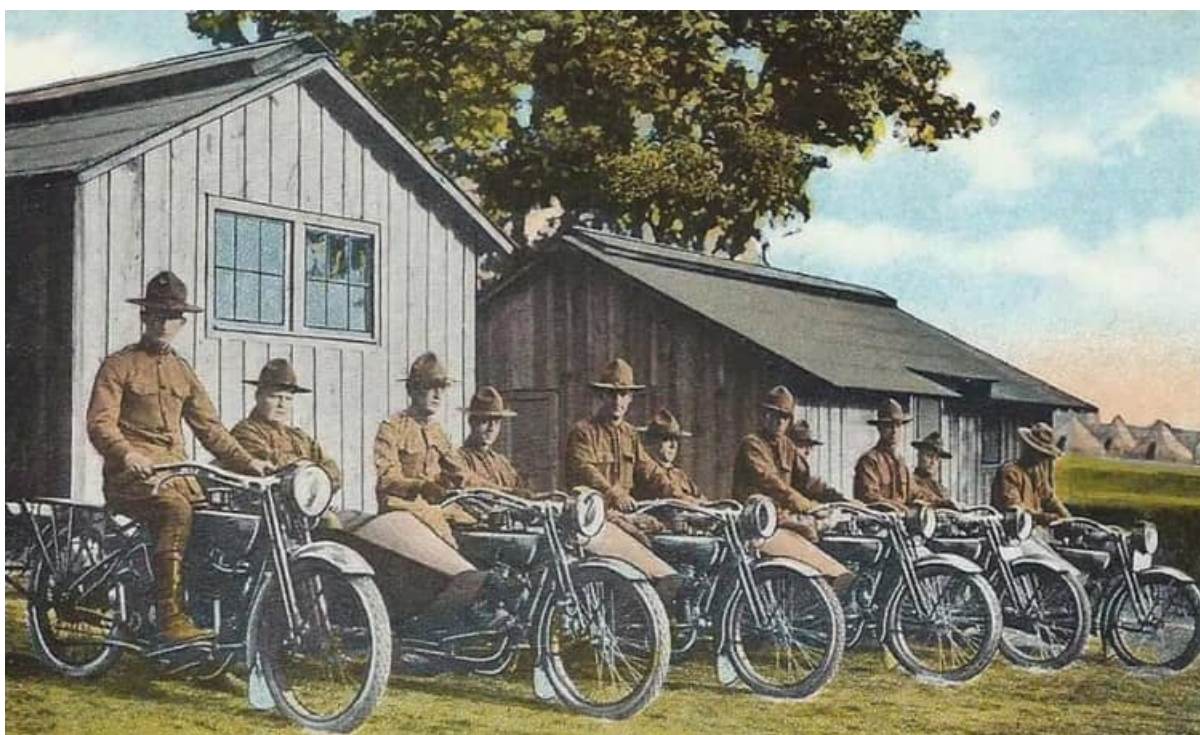


FONTLEVOY 1918 CAFE DU COMMERCE





American DRs in training, 1916.



1917: Doughboys under training at Camp Dodge, Iowa.

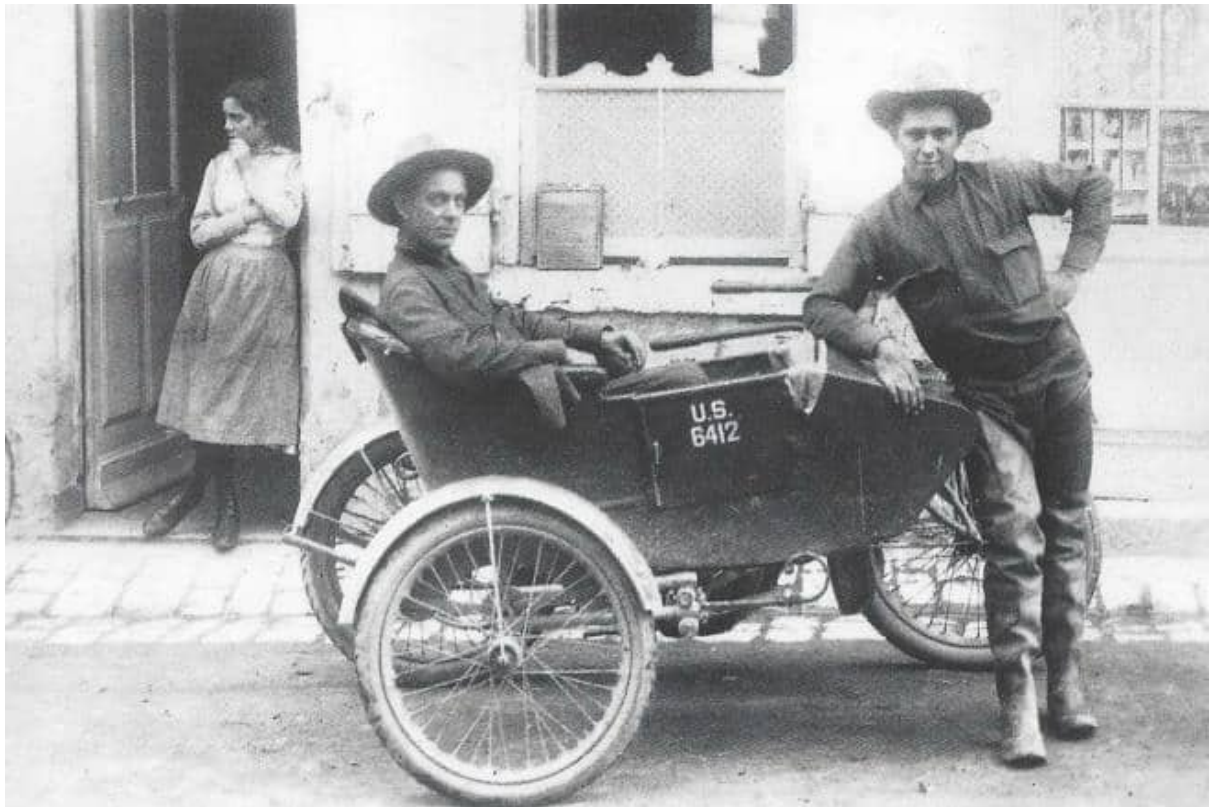








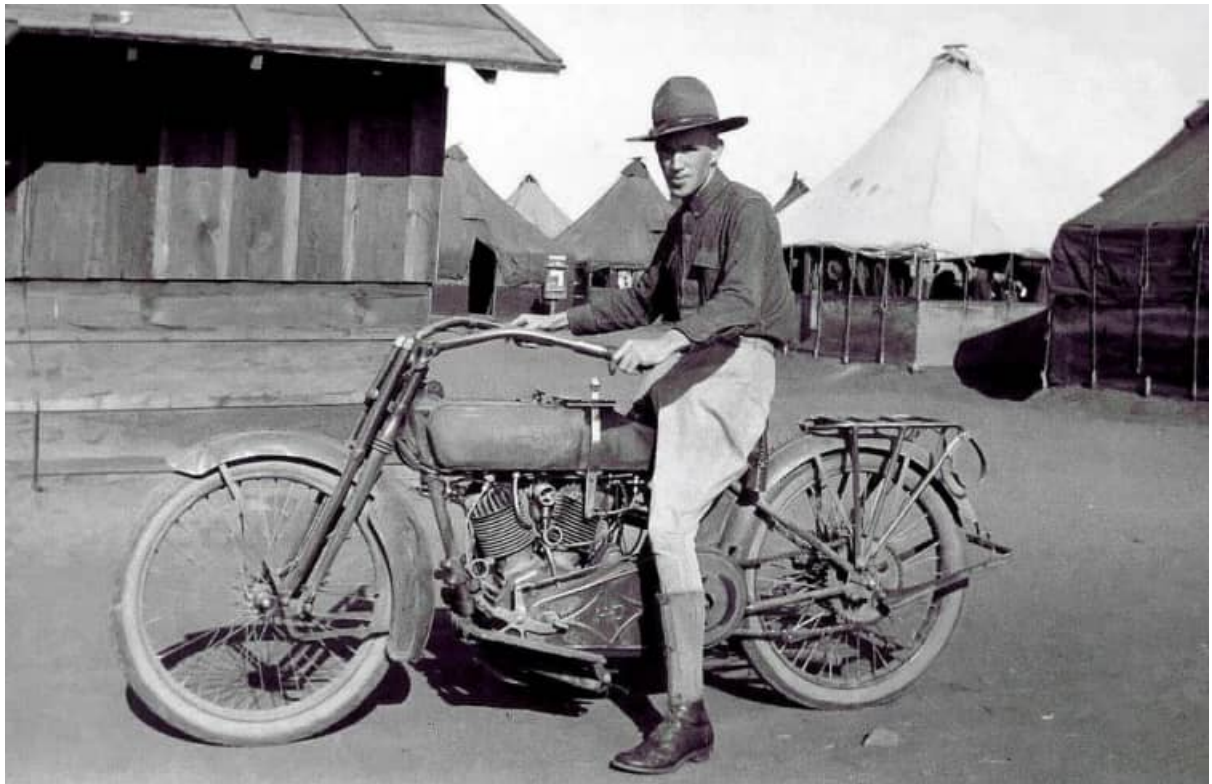




The original caption reads: "1918. Fontelvoy. Soldats Americains en sidecar."





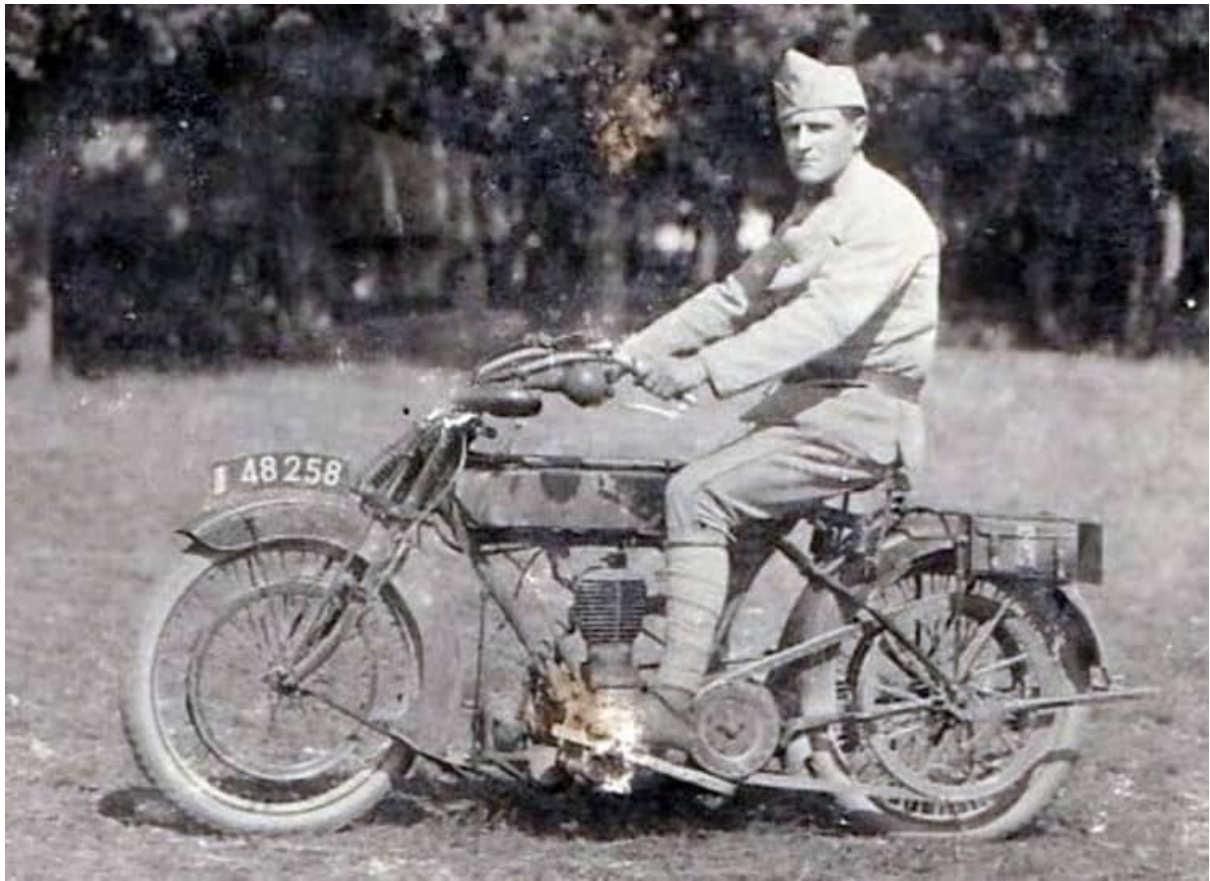












This doughboy had the good fortune to experience the delights of a Brummy Beeza...





...but he'd doubtless have agreed that his comrade was more fortunate.



Nothing known about this striking pic, but it's clearly posed; not least because the photographer would have been a sitting target. (And I bet the DRs hated being ordered to lay their bikes down.)

***Here are three images of Candians who were in both world wars from start to finish, and whose role is sometimes overshadowed by their northern neighbours.***



The bike's obviously from Milwaukee but these lads are training in British Columbia.



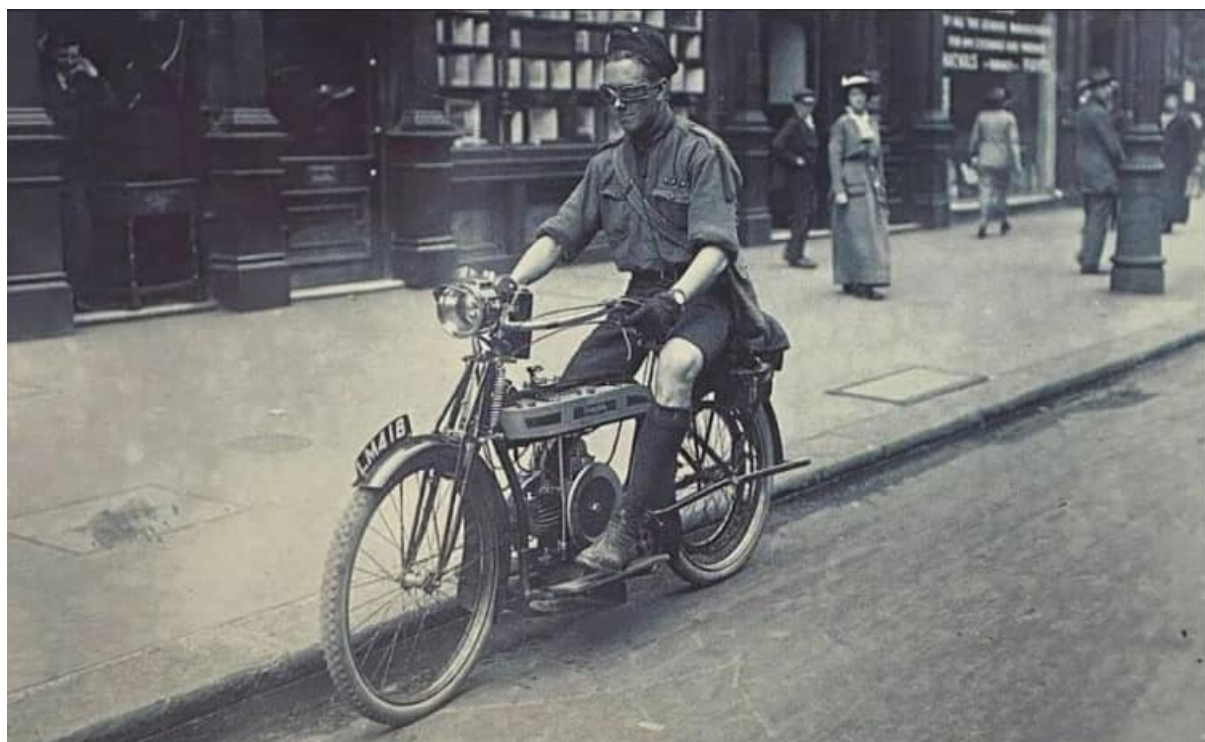
Nice to put a name to the face: this is Captain Hopkins, trying a Duggie for size at Niagara Camp, Ontario.





The combo's from Springfield, Mass, but these lads are braving the winter in Mohawk, Ontario.

















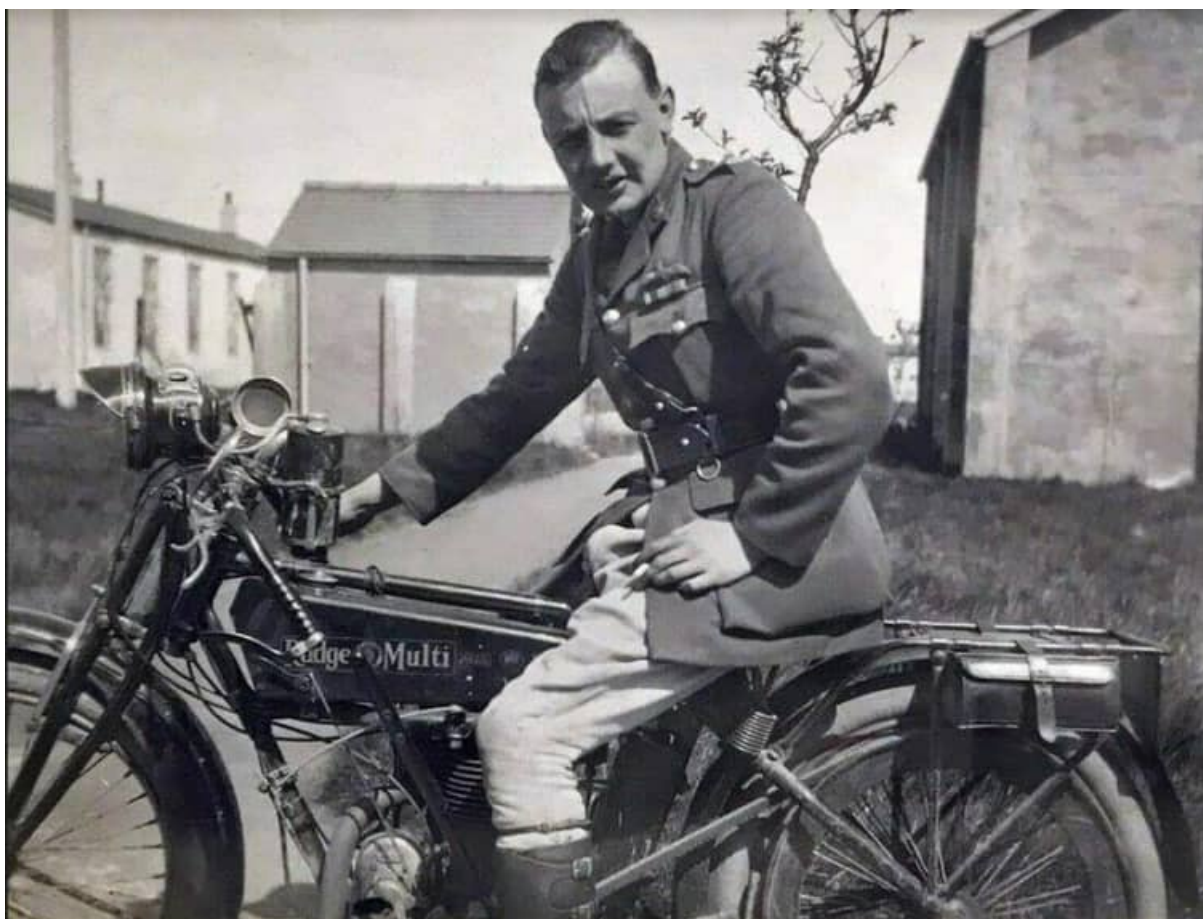


This urbane Douglas rider sports non-WD leather gaiters; is he a civvy? An off-duty DR? No idea. In any case, that's an impressive headlamp...





...but not as impressive as the searchlight on the front of this Rudge Multi.



Another Rudge Multi, in this case ridden by an RFC officer.

*As well as despatch riders and machine guns motor cycles carried casualties...*



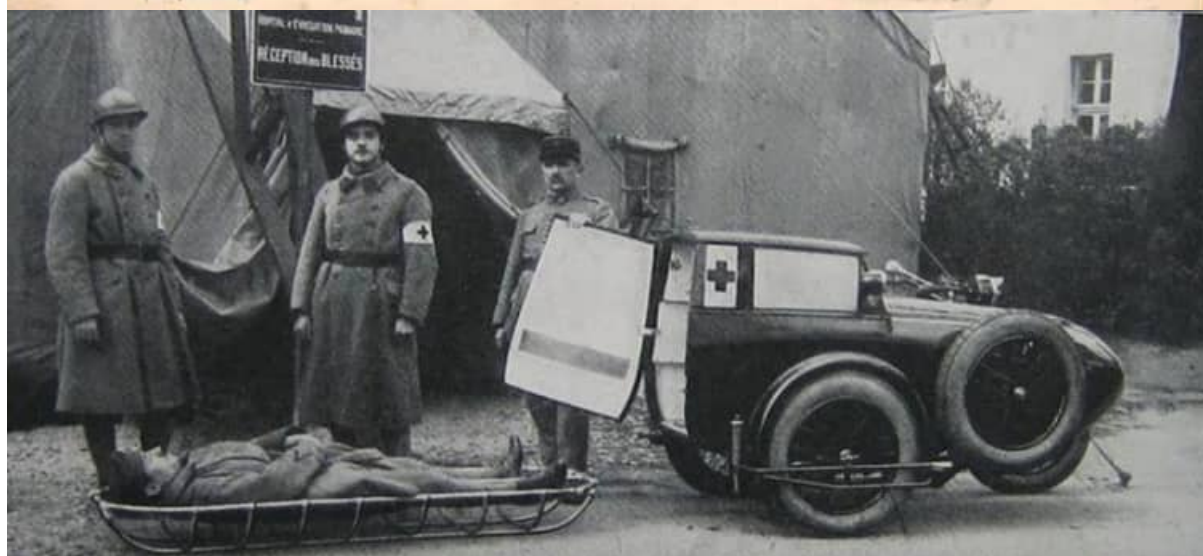






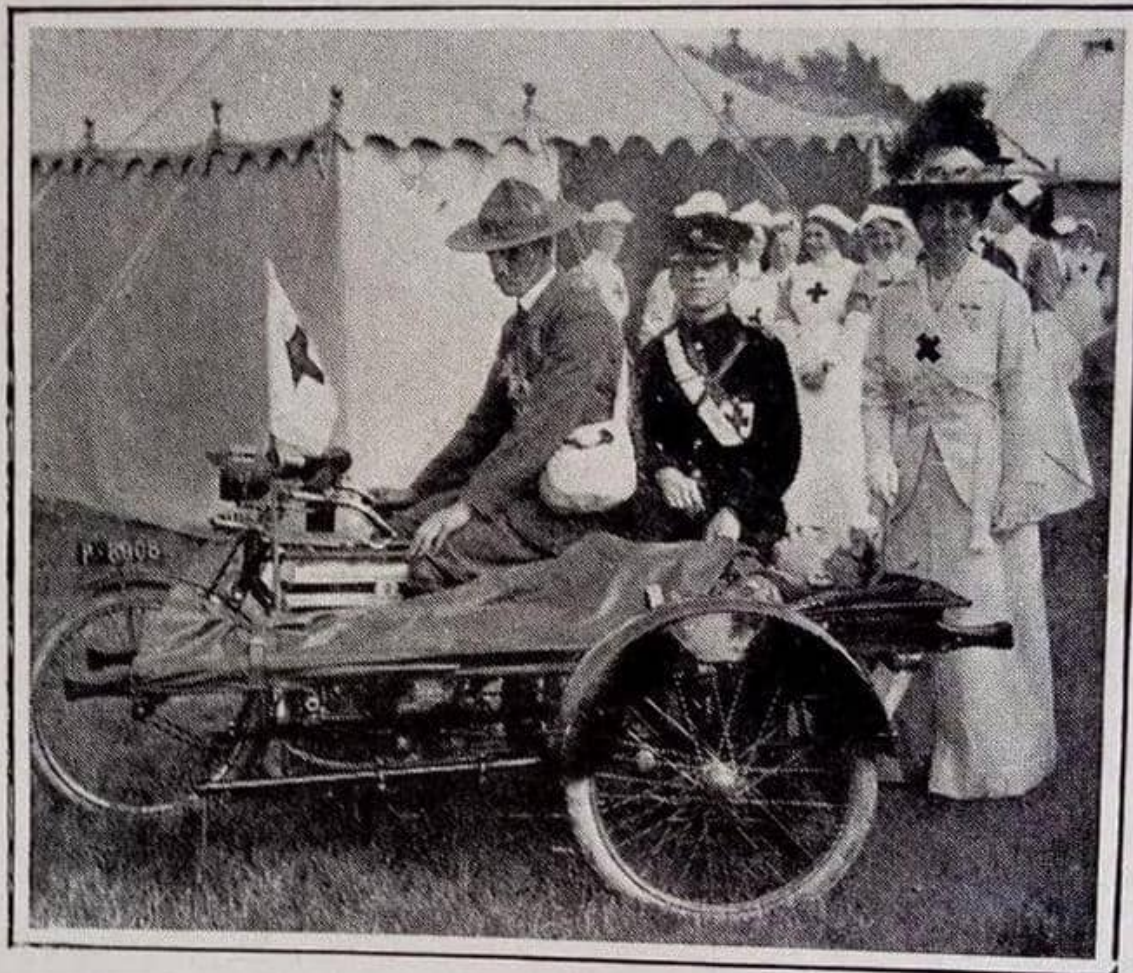


This Army Medical Corps sergeant and his Trusty Triumph both display Red Cross badges.



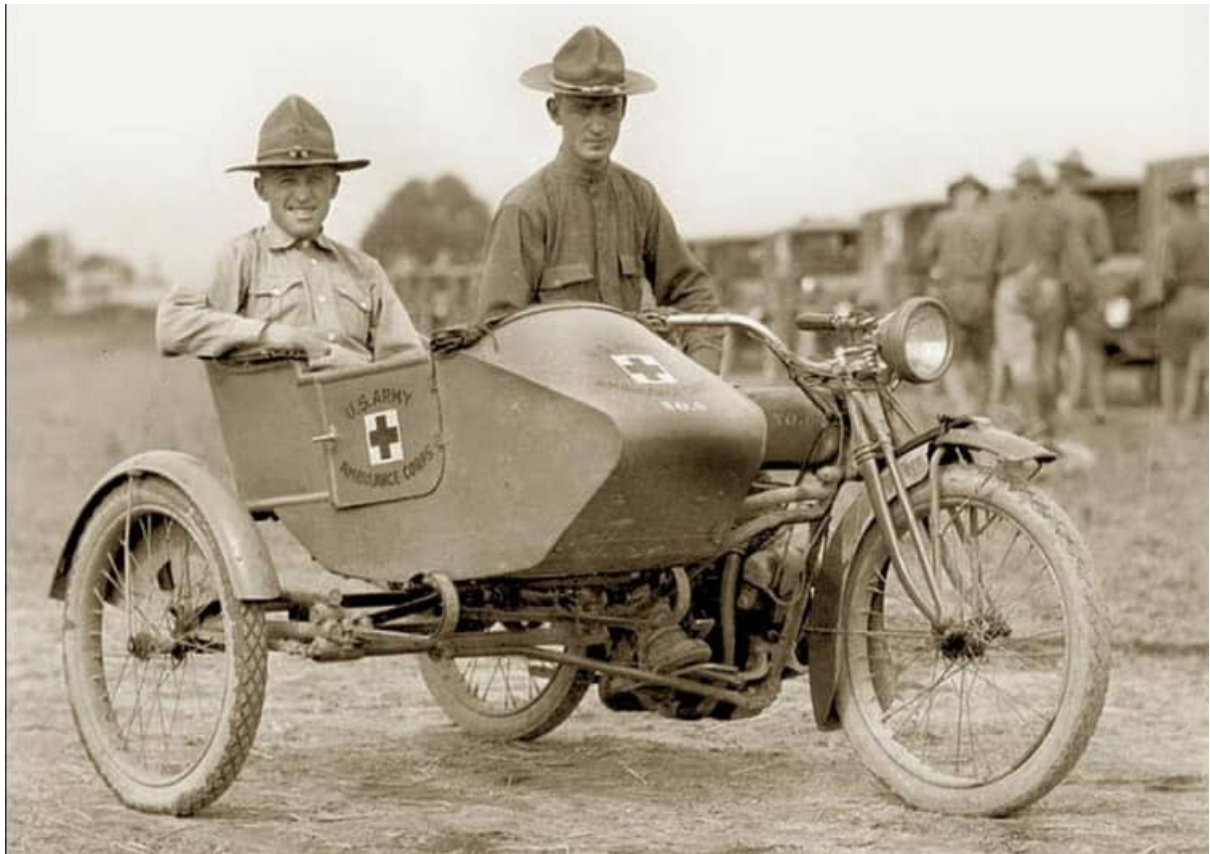


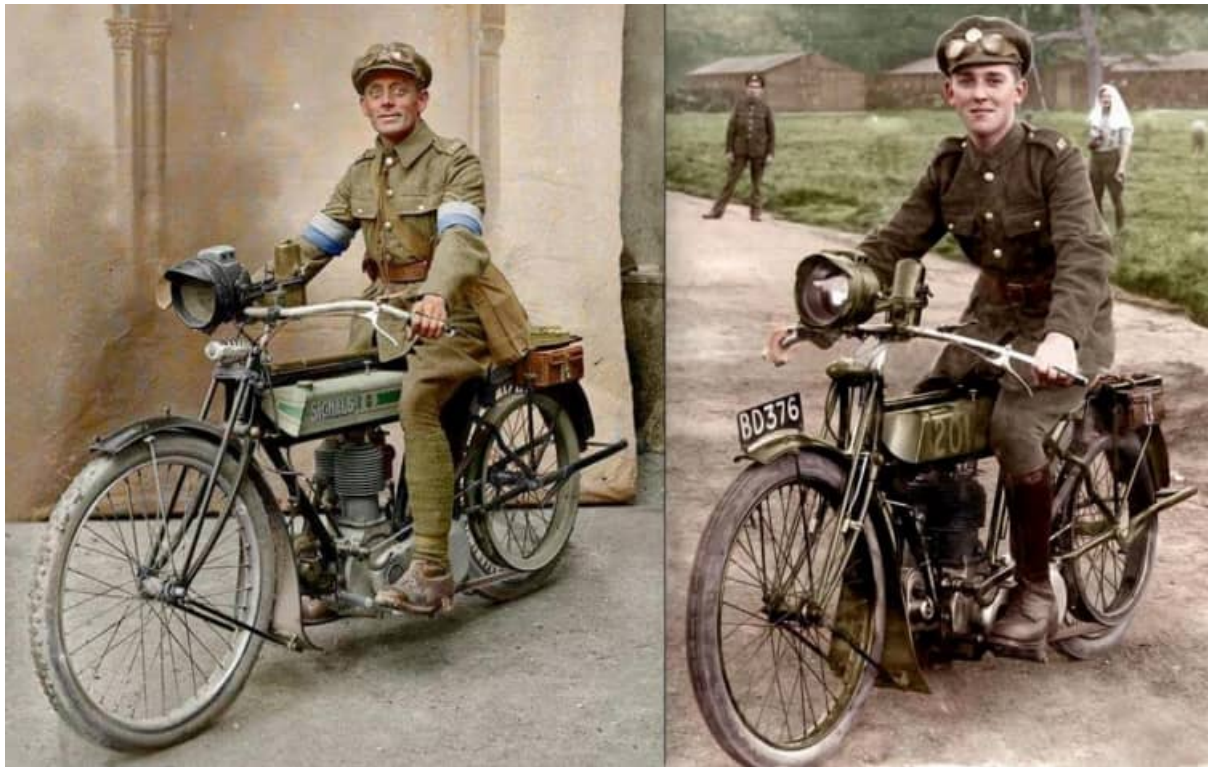




A MOTOR-CYCLE AMBULANCE.







The Triumph on the left bears a 'Signals' emblem, for the Royal Signals Regiment? Maybe, but that's not the Signals regimental badge. Maybe the armbands indicate that this rider is involved in some sort of military exercise. Again, I really don't know. The youngster on the right has fitted dropped bars to his Trusty, which indicates a sporting background.





Another WD mount bearing the legend 'Signals'. *Motor Cycle's* Bob Currie, who was a DR with the Royal Signals in World War 2, was of the opinion that only Royal Signals riders were entitled to call themselves Despatch Riders. Lesser mortals, he averred, were properly described as 'motor cycle orderlies'.

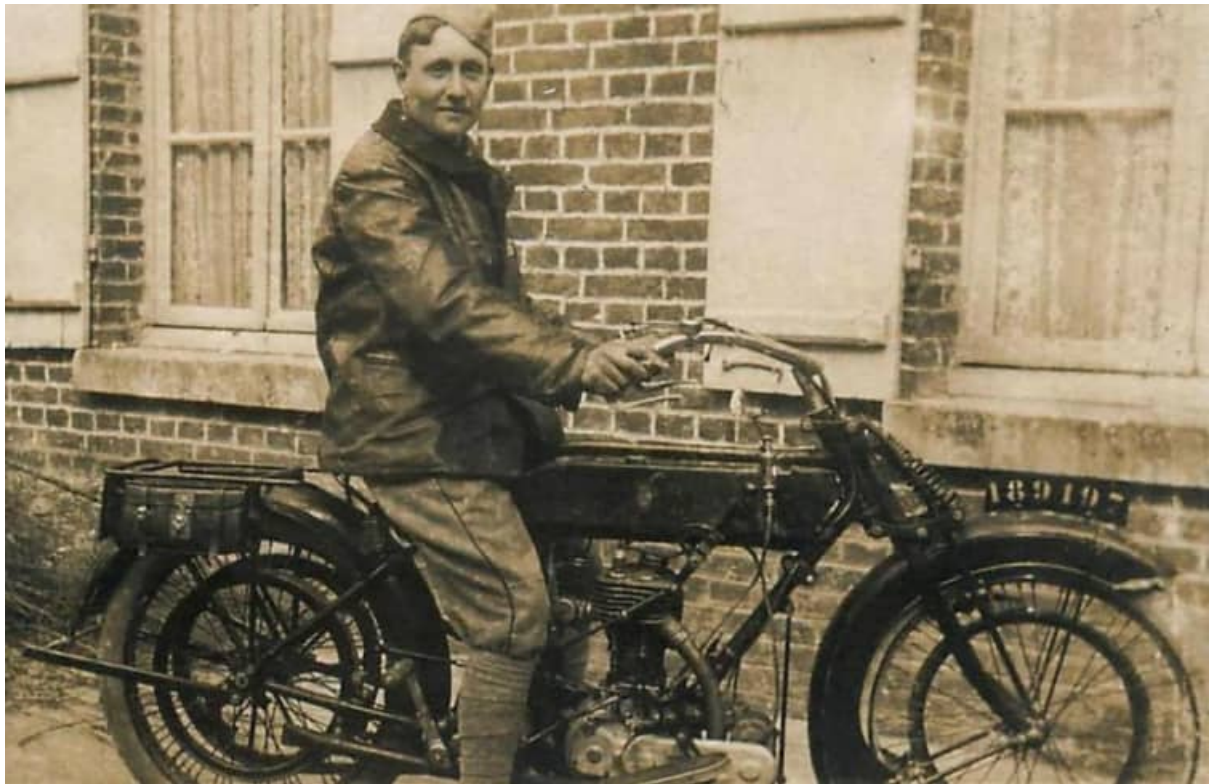




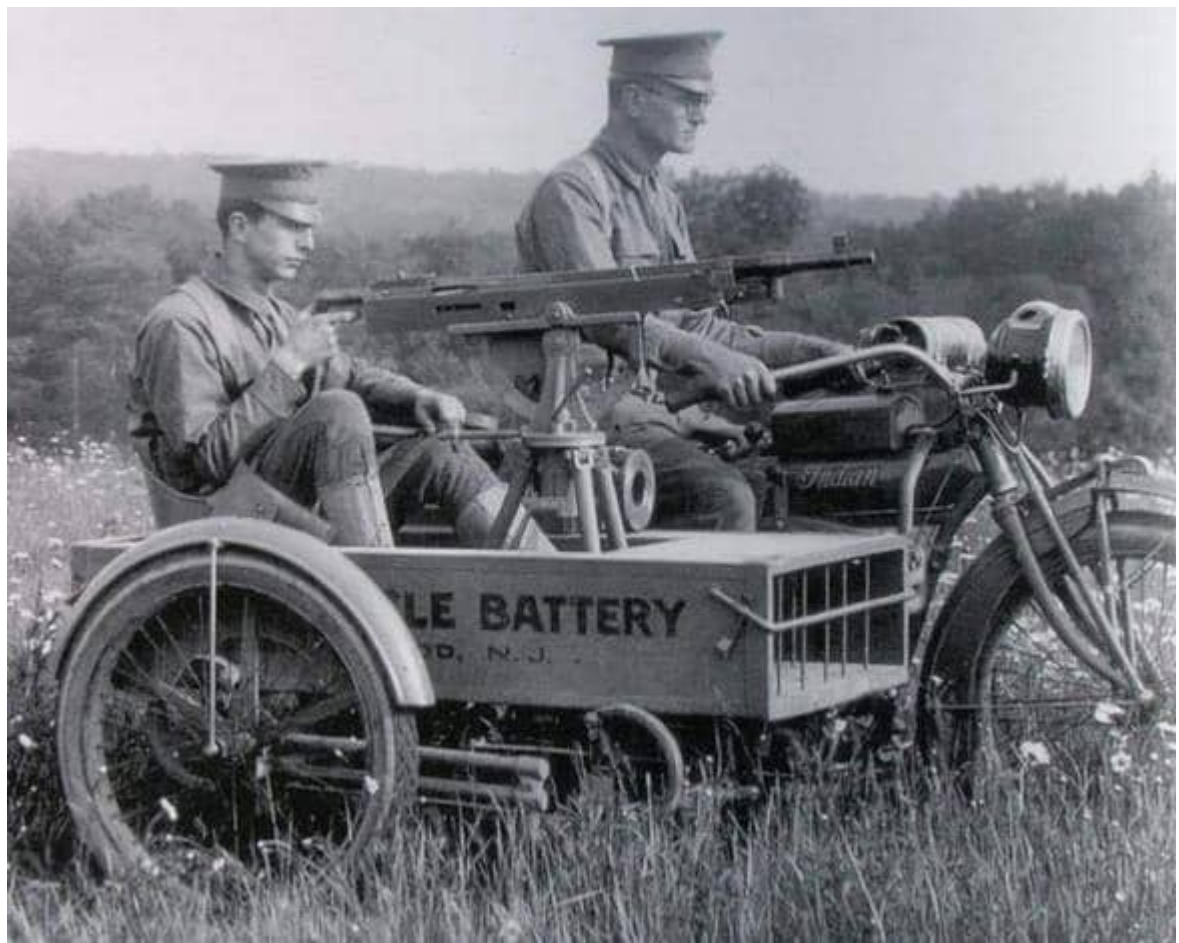
P&M's were the favoured mounts of the Royal Flying Corps; this example has found its way to Egypt.

















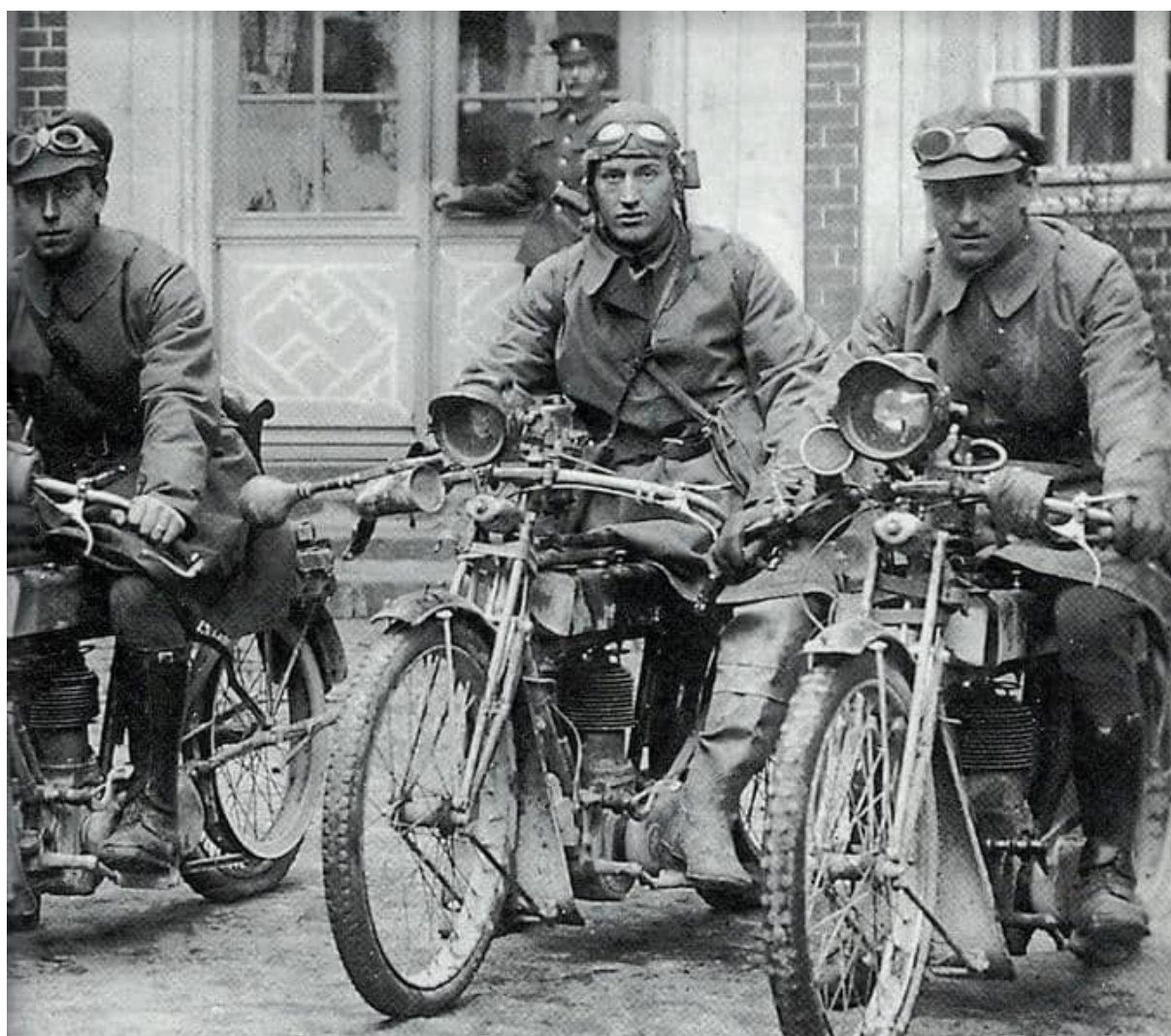
























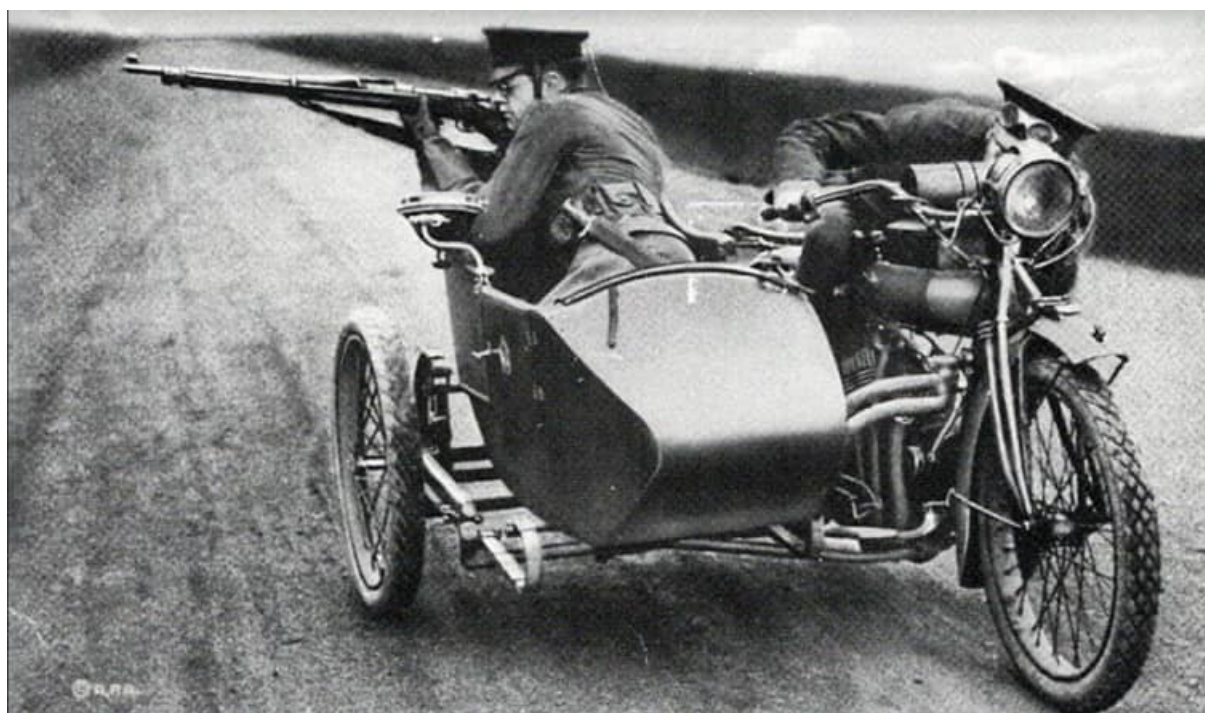
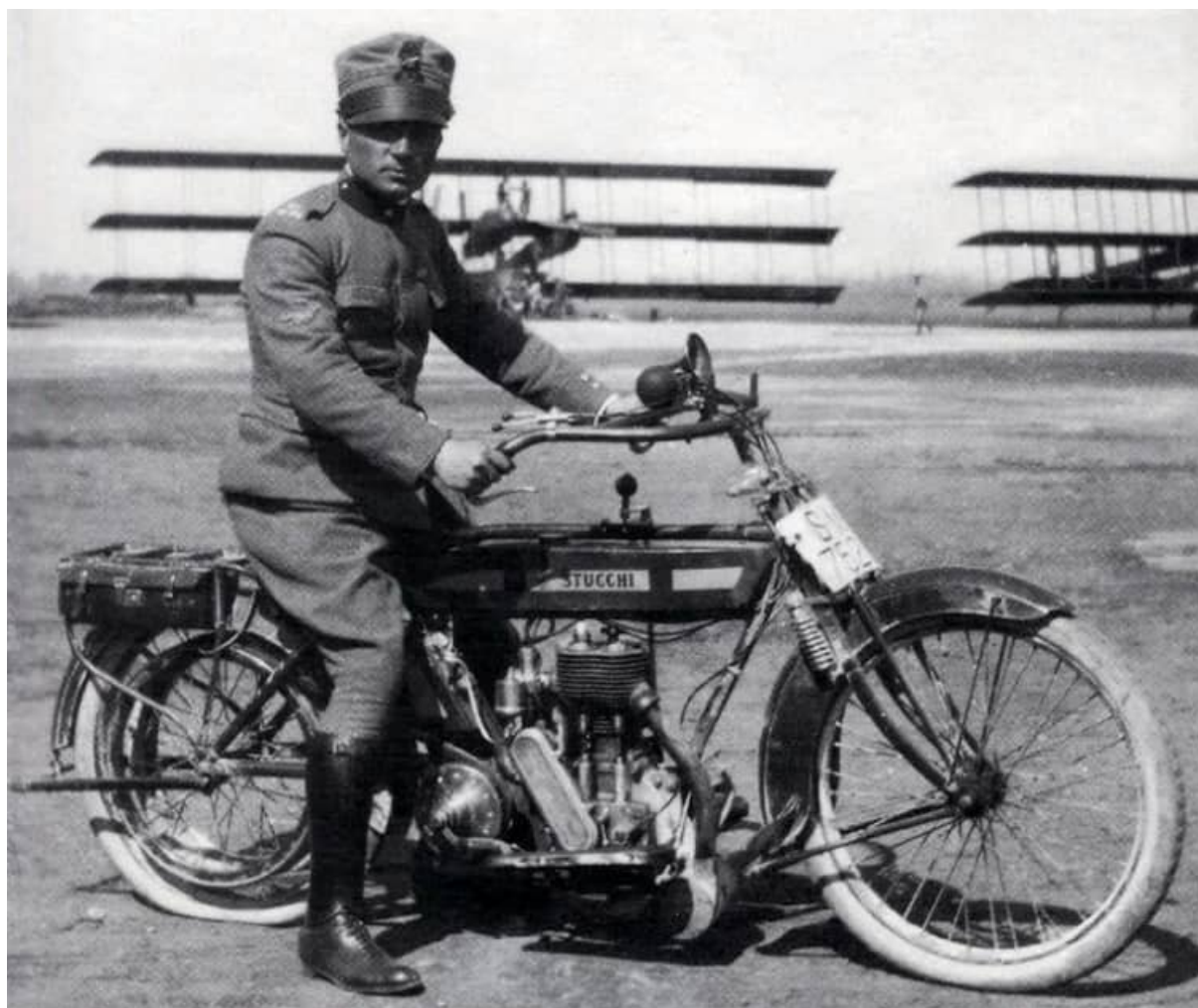














A clever Australian despatch rider firing a rifle





**The Graphic was a British weekly illustrated newspaper published from 1869-1932; in 1915 it published a series of photos under the heading 'Dare-Devil Riders in Training for the Front'.**



“By their splendid achievements at the front, the motor-cycle despatch-riders earned from our soldiers the proud nickname of the ‘Dare-devil Riders’. Many a road-hog ‘knut’ of yesterday took to ‘screaming’ under fire along the rough roads of France and Flanders, while hundreds more were in training in England.”



“Despatch-riders using their motor-cycles as shelter and cover. With the two machines forming the sides of the

improvised shelter, they are roofed with bundles of faggots and foliage, which effectively screen both man and machines from reconnaitring aircraft.”



“An ambush of motor despatch-riders in training. They are lying in wait for a ‘suspected’ motor-car that they have received orders to search. The men are armed with Service revolvers.”



“The difficulties and dangers of motor despatch-riders are legion, and their strenuous, invaluable work has been the subject of much praise in the course of the war. Frequently the country through which they have to travel is full of obstructions, bad roads, water-logged byways, etc. But the modern scout on his iron steed is able and willing to go anywhere, even through a flood as seen in this striking picture, a feat one time regarded as impossible with an air-cooled engine.”





“With our despatch-riders over the icy Pennines.”









A Jerry POW helps keep a Don R on the move.



Sergt. LECOURT  
Motocycliste du Colonel,  
251<sup>e</sup> de Ligne.

"How pleased I am to be the possessor of a 'Douglas.'  
Never any trouble, and always ready to help me in my  
war duties."





This Wanderer was pictured in 1916.













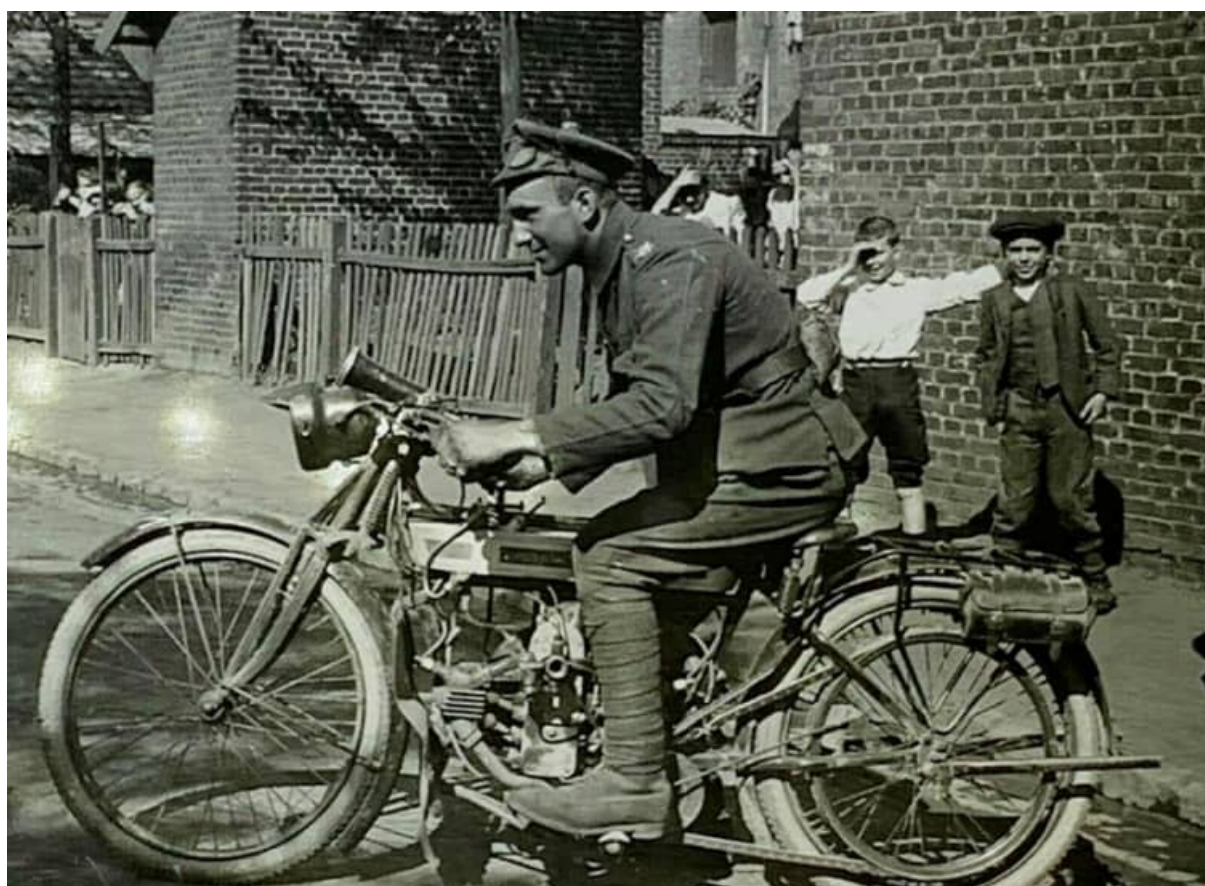


‘Somewhere in England’ Canadian trainee dispatch riders about to set out on a run to prepare them for active service on the Western Front.























This snap was taken in Ismailia, Egypt; these Tommies were part of the forces defending the Suez Canal.





The Empire rallied round the flag: these diggers rode with the Fifth Australian Light Horse.



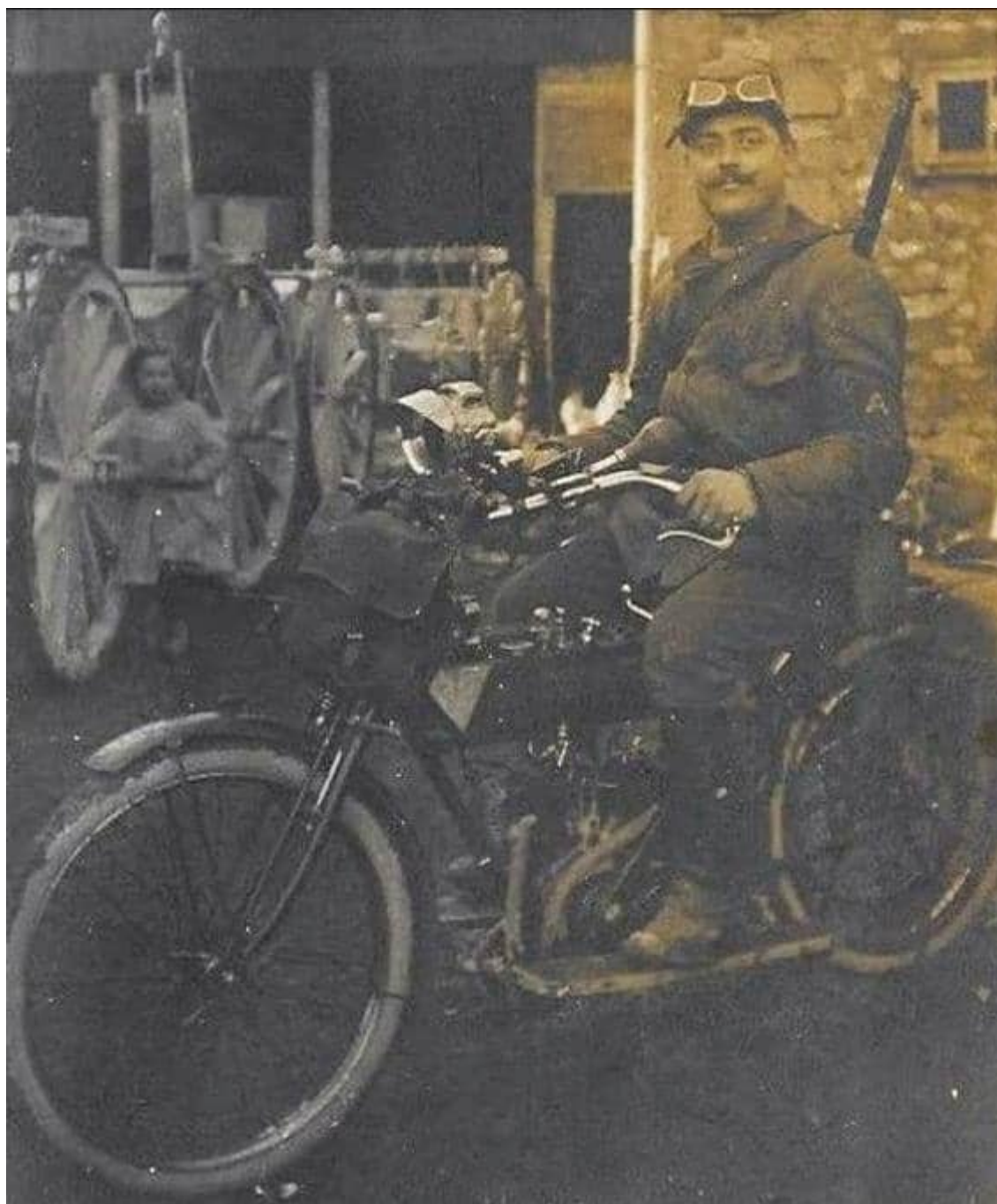
It's good to put a name to the face. Pictured astride his Beeza in 1915 is Sgt Bill Humphreys of the RFC.



Here's Bill again in 1917 with his off-duty mount, and Indian. With those dropped bars and slash-cut straight-through exhausts it might fairly be described as a cafe racer (it was only six years earlier, in what must have seemed another lifetime to Bill and his comrades, that three of the Springfield twins had taken top three spots in the Senior TT).













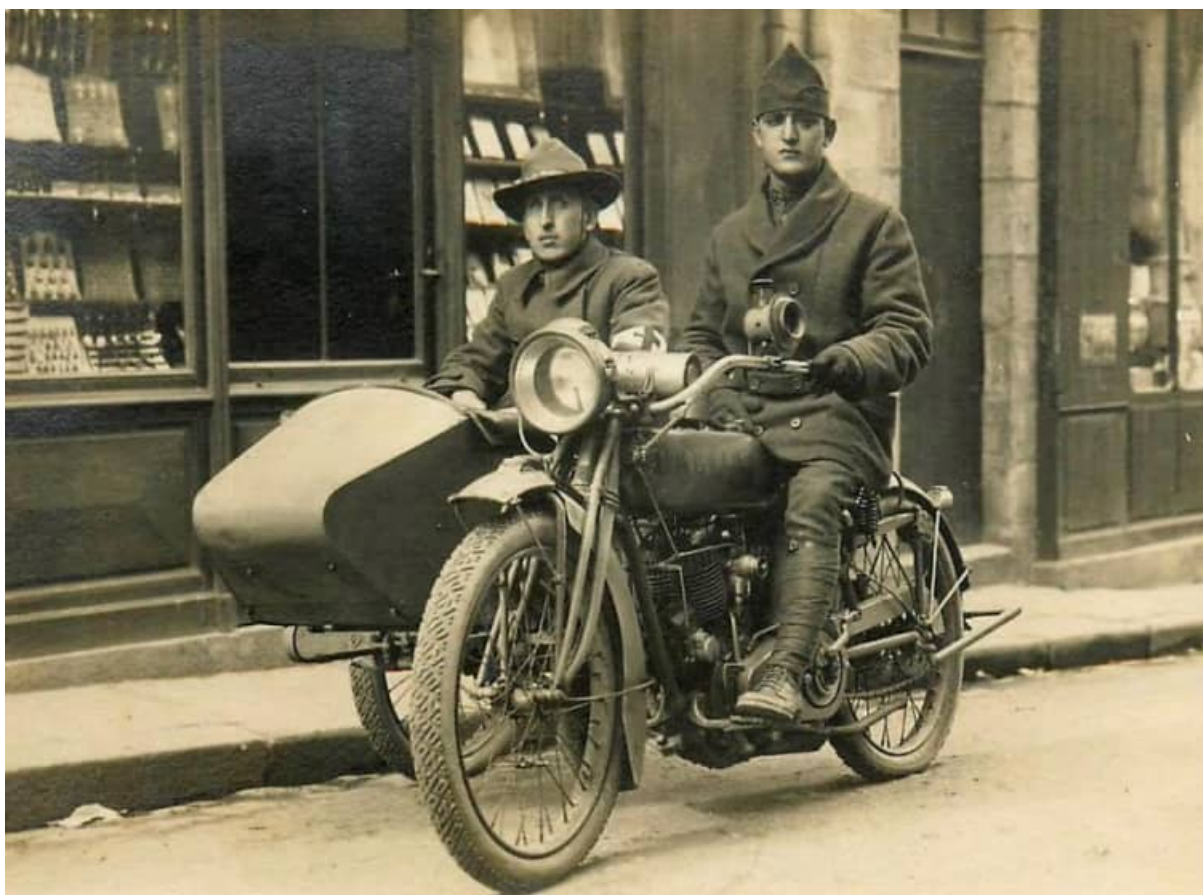






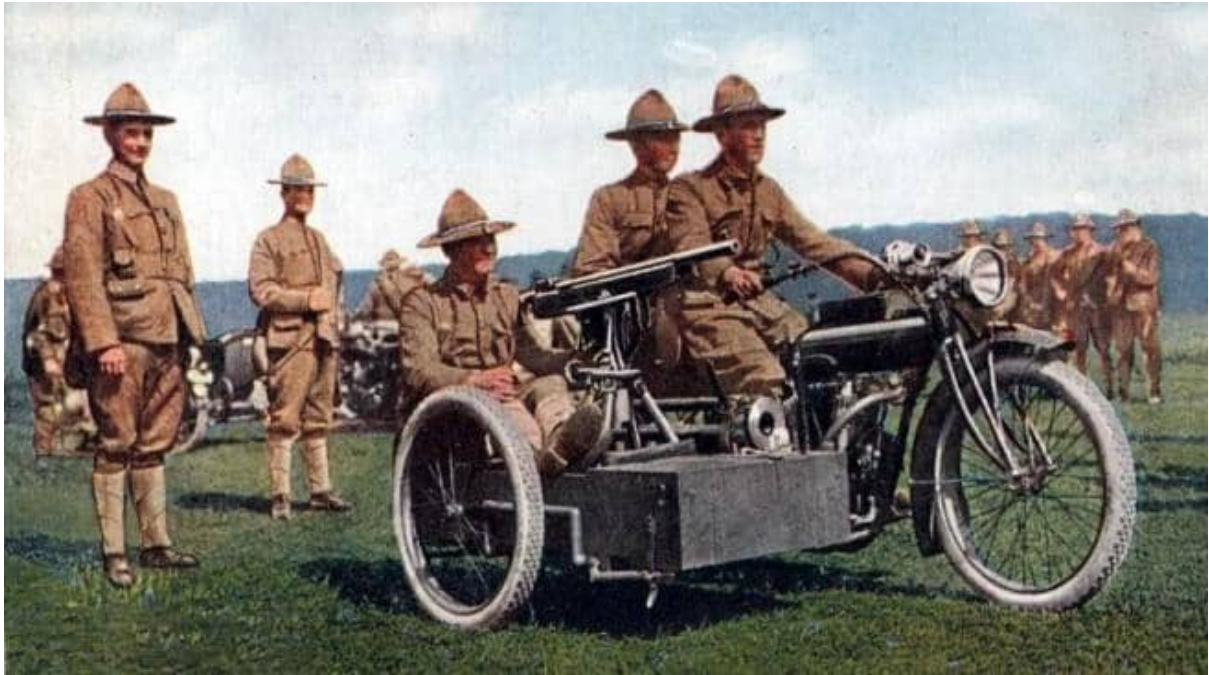






These poilus were serving with the 66th Infantry Regiment.





A Great War machine gun outfit in colour? Americans, of course.





Machine gun outfits were pressed into action as anti-aircraft platforms...





156. GUERRE DE 1914-15. — *Un Motocycliste remet un pli à un Aviateur partant en mission.*

G. Mathière, Editeur, 34, rue de Charonne, Paris.

...while in the absence of radios in aircraft DRs were busy delivering orders and collecting reconnaissance reports.



Pigeons

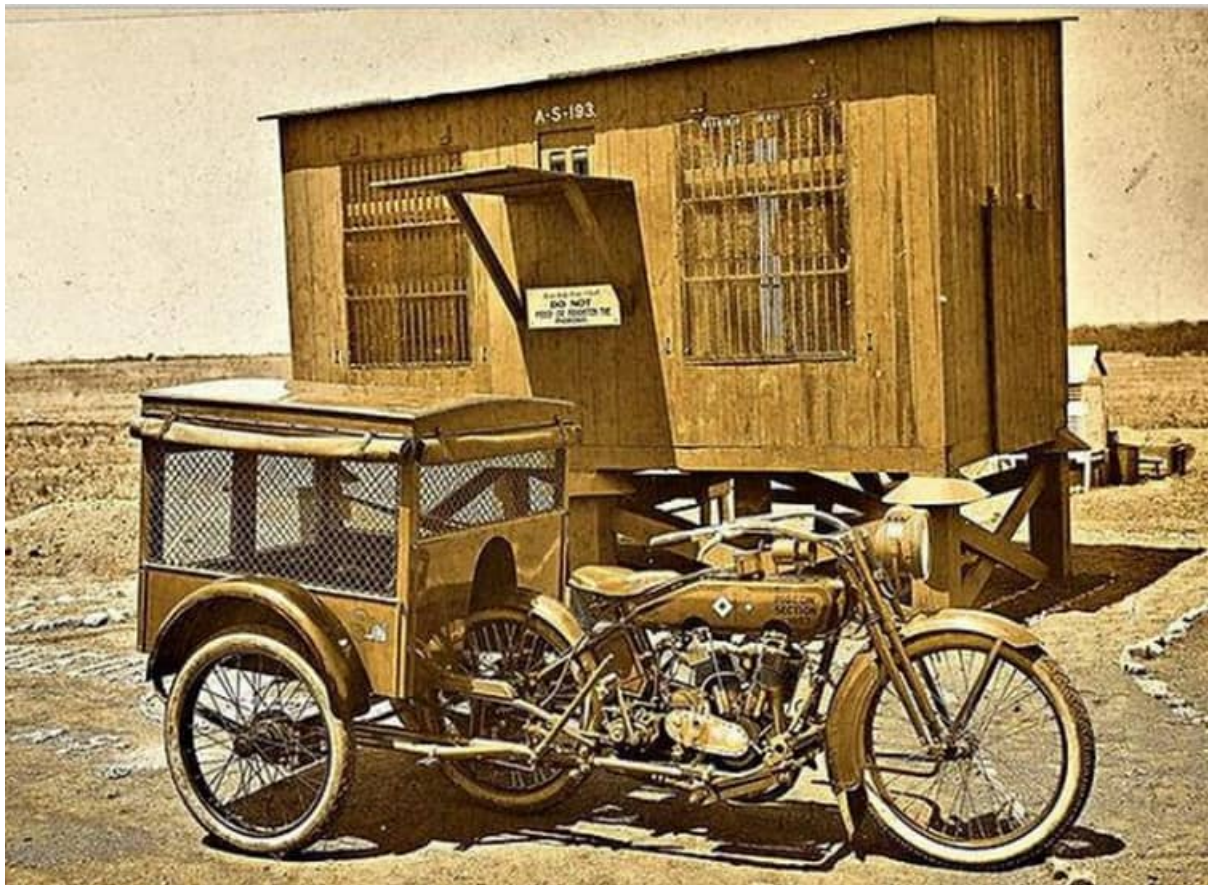
were a reliable method of communication and motor cycles were a reliable way of getting them where they were needed.





Yes you could carry pigeons on a solo but when there's the chance of a lift on a combo...





This pigeon carrier was at Fort Sill, Oklahoma when the war ended, so the pigeons never made it to the western front. You have to wonder how despatch riders reacted to the 'PIGEON SECTION' badge on the Harley's tank.



Note the pigeon's in training in their cart, on their way to a training flight. The doughboy who looked after them carried the rank 'pigeoneer', poor sod.





This magnificent contemporary illustration carried the caption “...during the great German spring offensives of 1918.”



Another fine illustration, this one (in *The Graphic*) was originally captioned: “British despatch rider halts for welcome refreshment in a partly ruined French village occupied by British troops.”





John Bull firmly in the saddle.

Entente Cordiale, with



Some RFC officers enjoyed the services of chauffeuses with P&Ms.





In 1918 the RFC became the RAF. The uniforms changed but officer transport was still handled by plucky gels and P&M combos.









This chauffeuse seems happy with her P&M and her char...



“...smile, smile, smile...” These jolly Don Rs and mechanics of the 60th Divisional Signal Company, Royal Engineers, are fettling their 4hp, 550cc ‘trusty’ Triumphs.





I suspect this is a contemporary sketch and, judging by the contract between the chinless British officer and the sturdy poilluts, I reckon the artist was French. Note the way that saucy demoiselle is using her riding crop...



A BAGGAGE CARRIER

*Tommy in Luck*





*Et pour revoir plus tôt ce regard qui m'envoûte,  
je brûlerai les relais le long de la route.*

PC  
4190/3

posed pic, but still a charming one. Bless 'em all.

Ok it's a



Above and below— detritus of a world war: surplus sidecars and bikes awaiting disposal at Cairo.







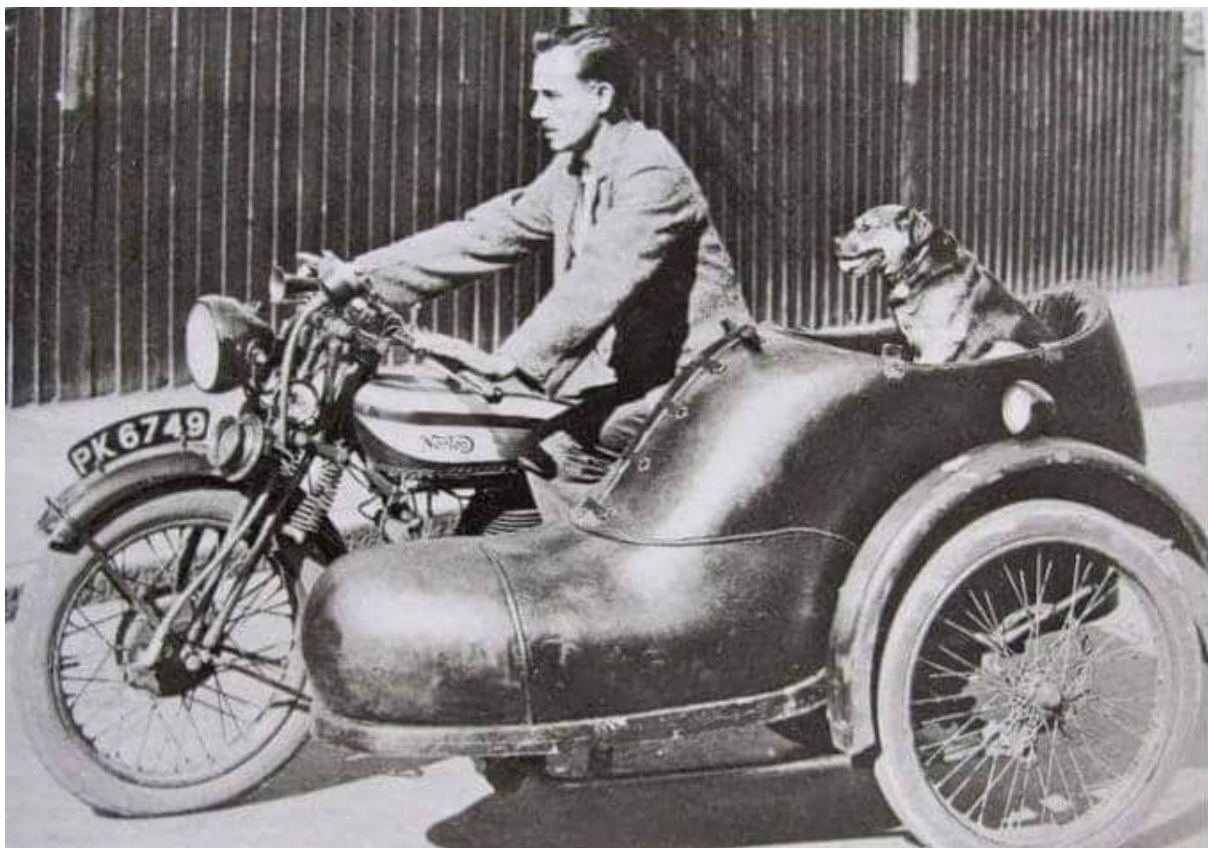


Peace broke out and so, it seems, did these American flappers and their canine chum...





...not that sensible Englishmen needed sidecars to transport their terriers.



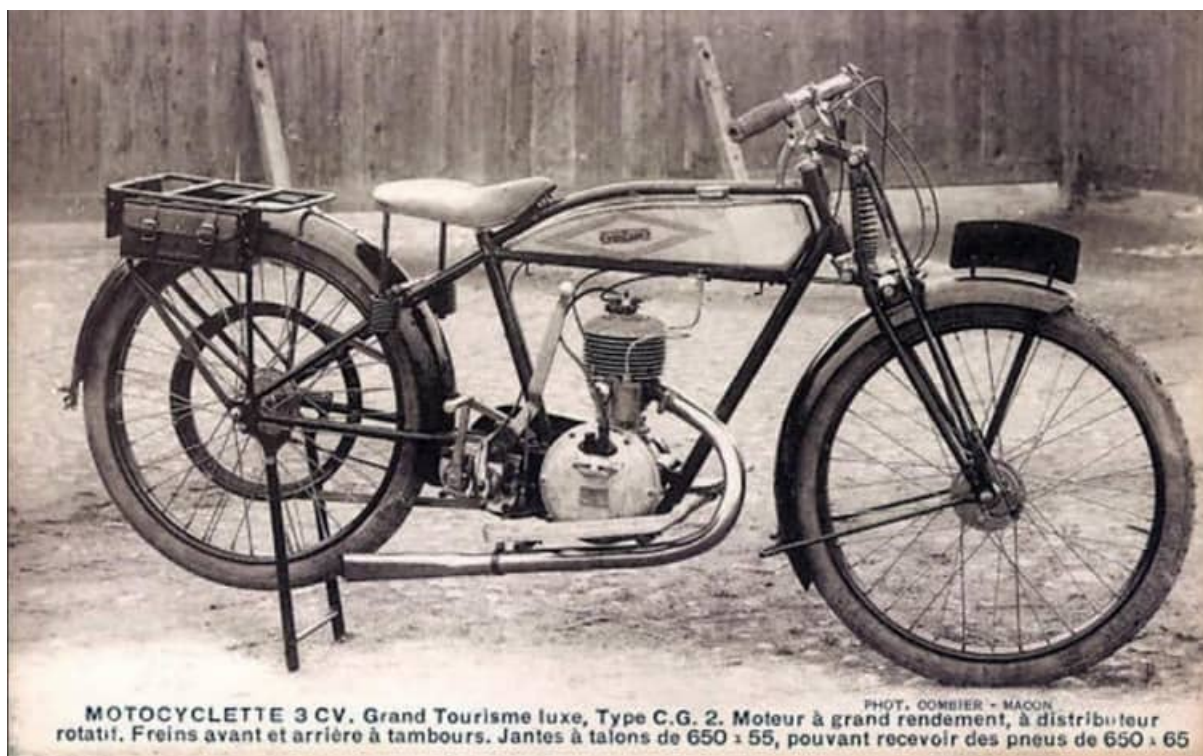
But on the other hand...(yes I know, this one's a tad anachronistic but it seemed to fit here).

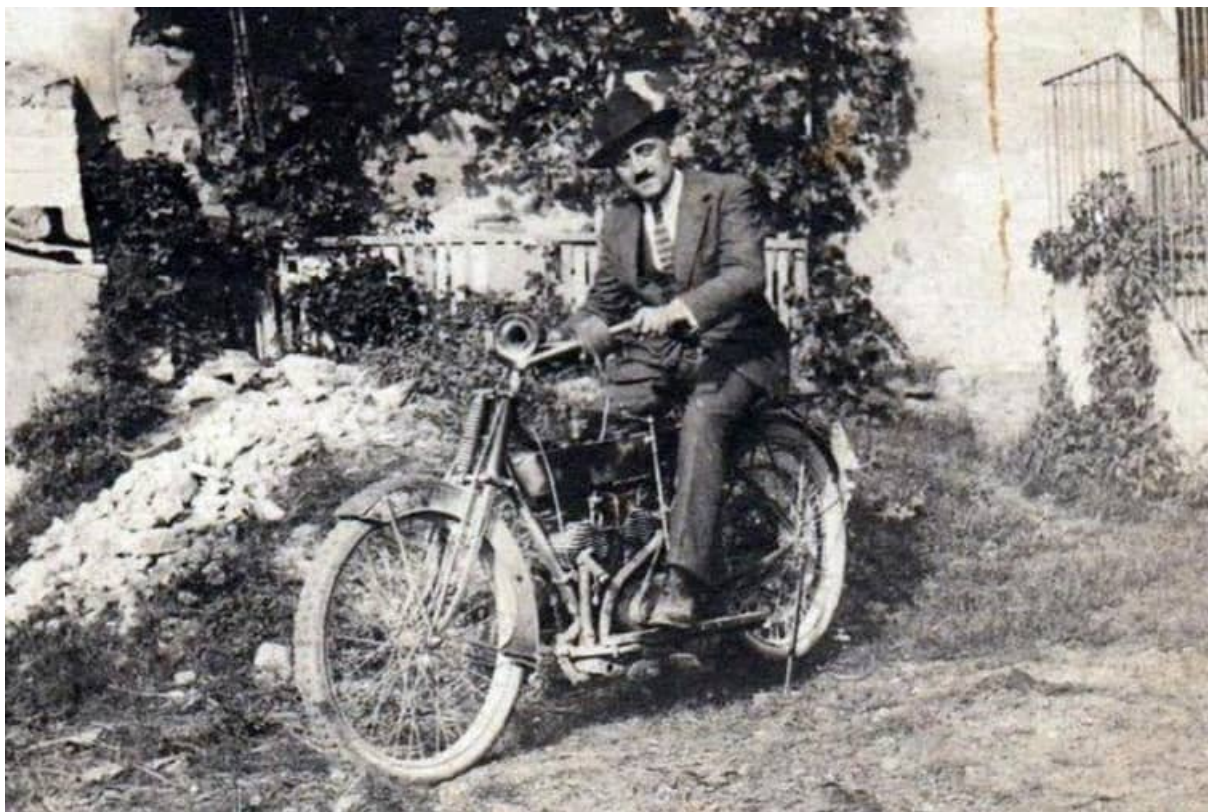


I was going to suggest that her pillion is giving the Excelsor-JAP its seal of approval, but I thought better of it.









When you're riding in the Egyptian sun a solar helmet makes sense.



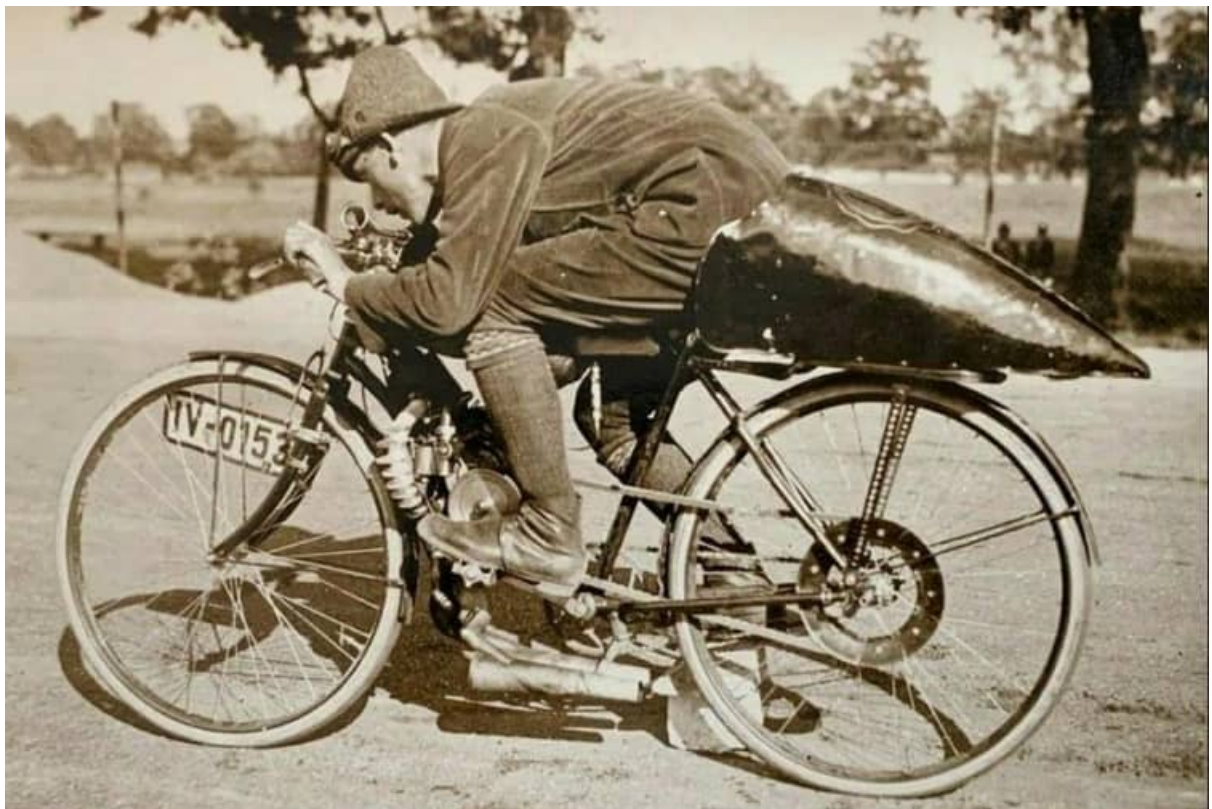








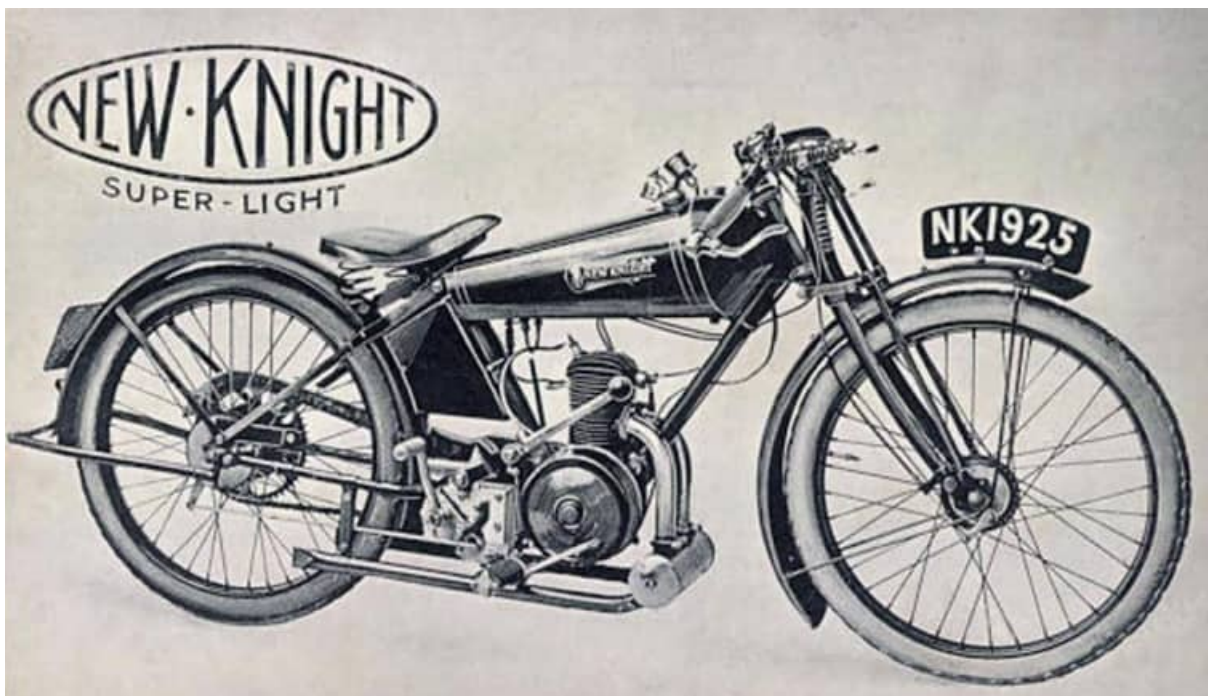
That Scott seems determined to keep climbing—and the rear stand is serving as a wheelie bar.











New Knight was in business from 1923-31, assembling bikes with Villiers lumps from 147-344cc as well as four-stroke 293cc JAPs.





Rush looks like an English name; in fact the marque hails from Belgium where machines were built from 1922-34. A Rush won the 1924 Monza GP, powered by a 248cc ohv Blackburne, but the firm also made its own, from 397-599cc.



Another Rush, whose military rider has a well filled flapper bracket.









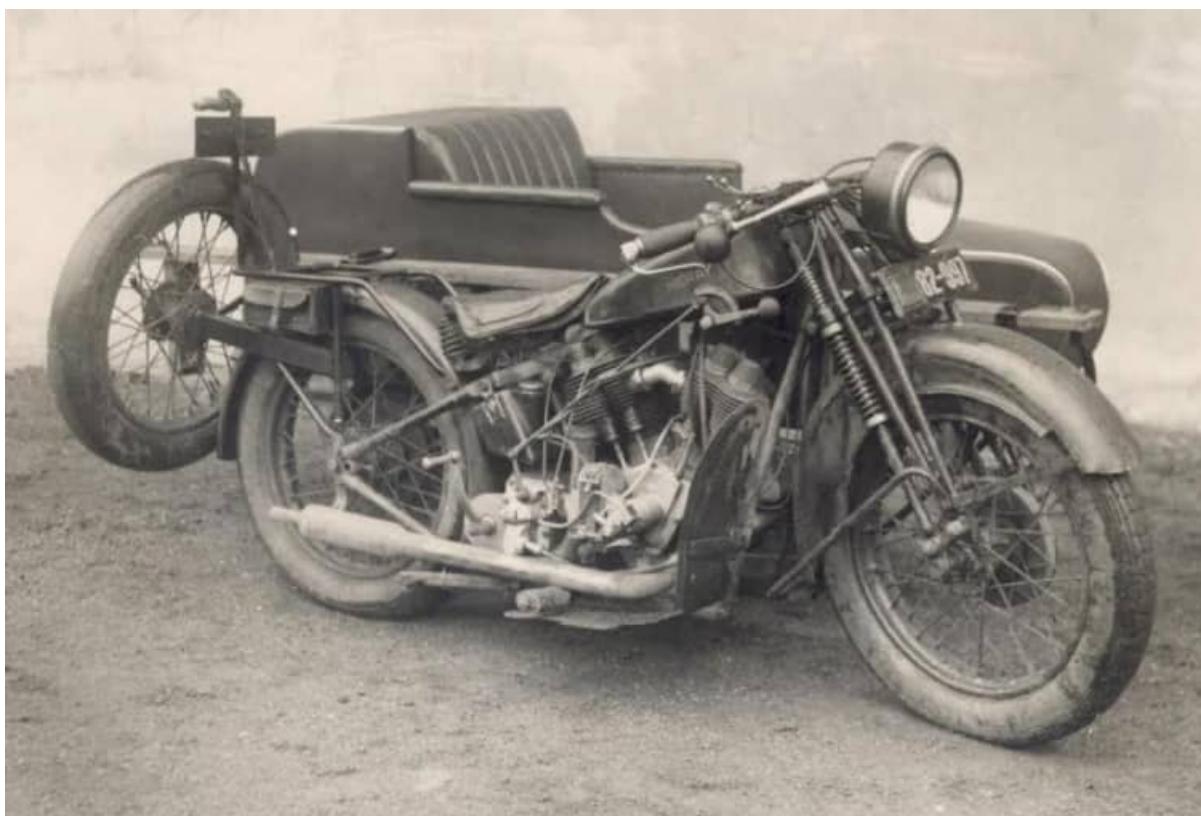












Say hello to the Meray, made in Hungary from 1921-44 with engines from 172-996cc courtesy of Villiers, Moto Reve, Puch, Blackburne and JAP (from 1936, according to Tragatsch, they also made their own 346cc and 496cc engines).





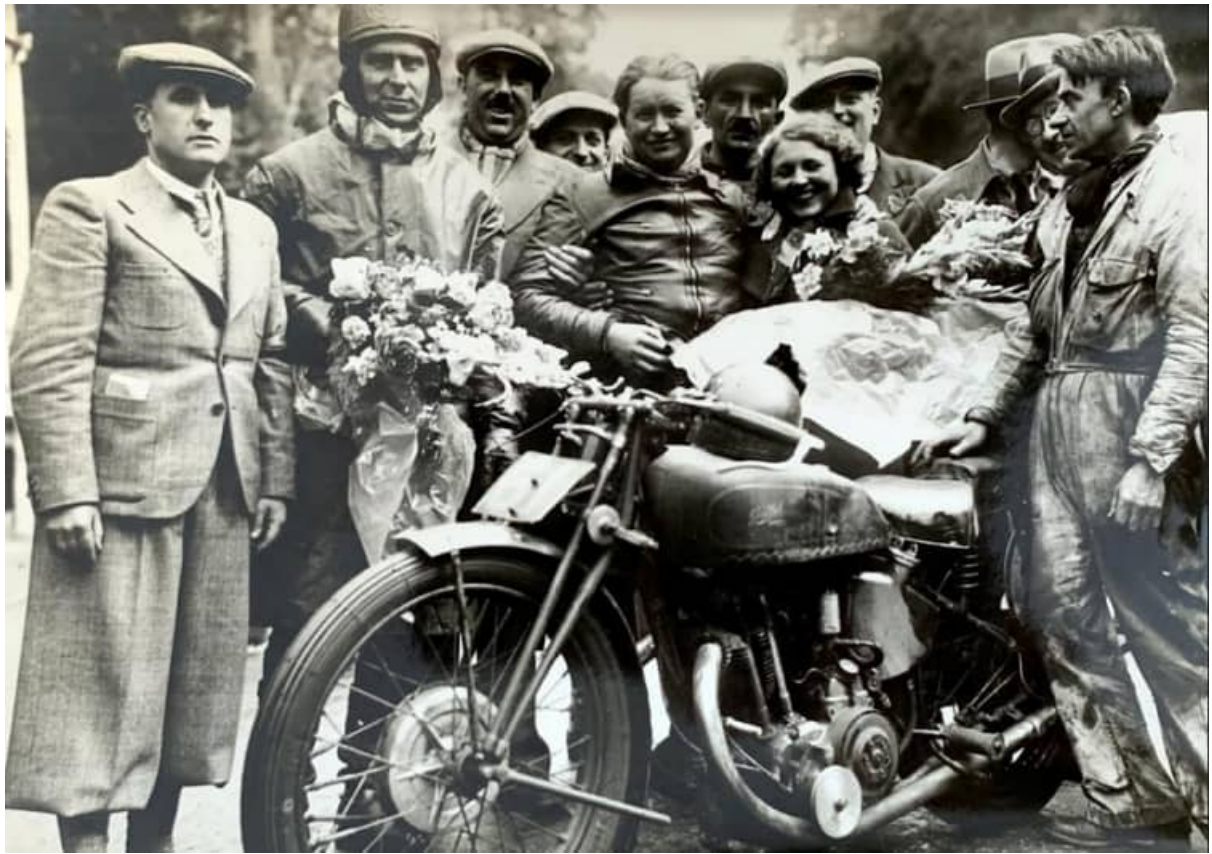


Judging by the clothing I'd guess that this snap of the Pioneer Run, and the one below, date from the 1950s (note the beards!).









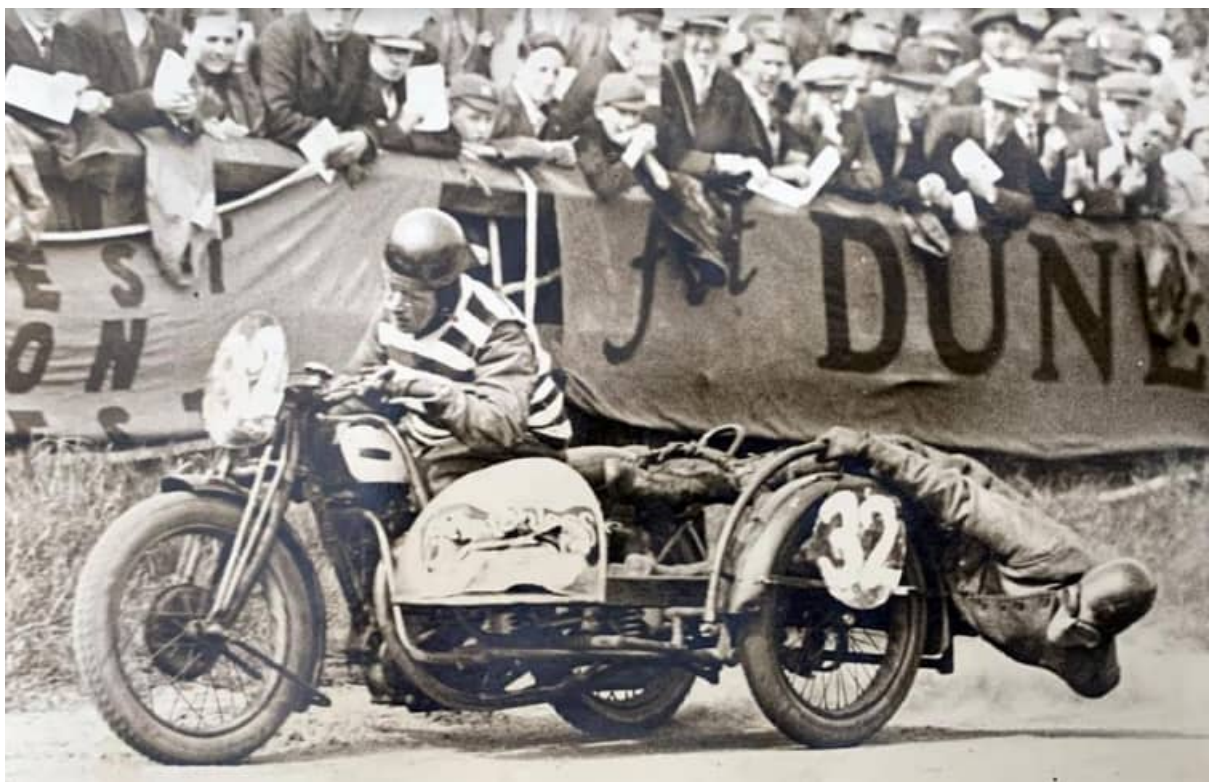


Judging by the hub-centre-steering front end this is an OEC; the sidecar suspension is equally interesting.

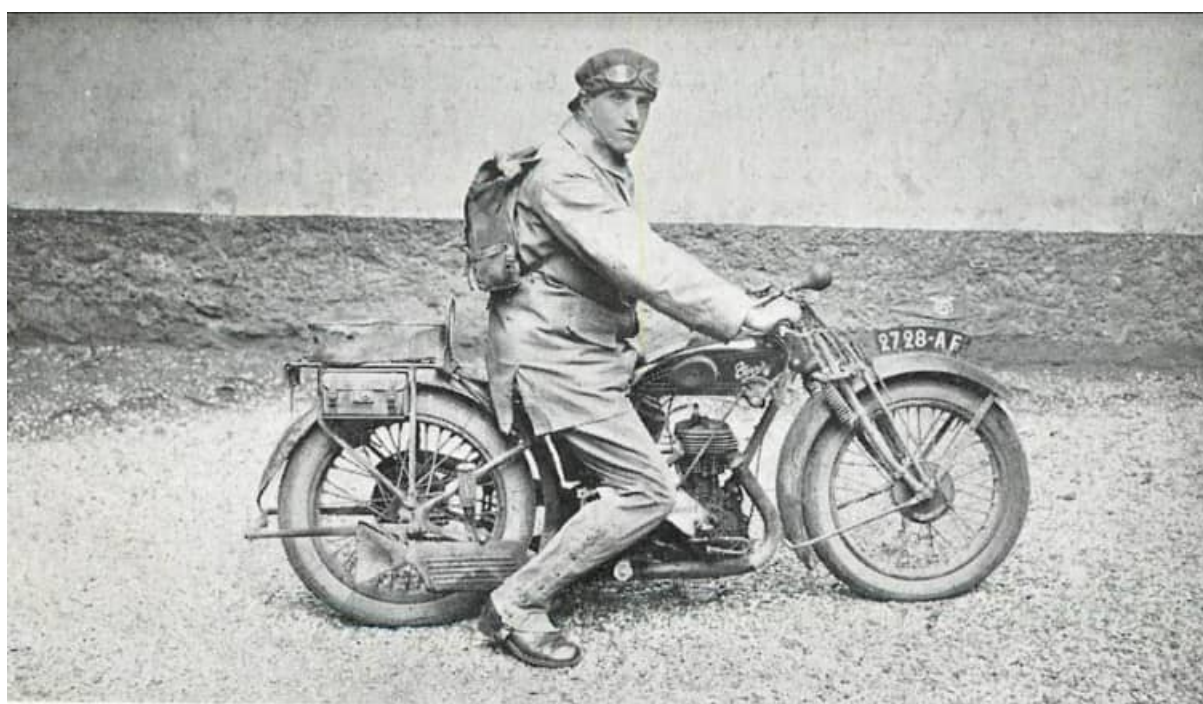


Before the Stuka dive-bomber there was, it seems, the Stuka two-stroke motor cycle.









Most of the riders in this melange are shown enjoying their motor cycling: this serious chap, named Huchard, earned his keep as a despatch rider between the Soissons and Levallois-Perret factories of the tyre manufacturer Wolber. His mount is a 1930(ish) 350cc Terrot; when the snap was taken he'd covered more than 140,000km on company business.





Here's another 1930ish machine, and it's a rare survivor. Meray, in business from 1921-44, was for a time Hungary's leading marque

## Images of Yesteryear

*The photo gallery whimsically entitled Illustrative Melange was inspired by images kindly supplied by my chum Francois who has also put together a series of excellent pictorial reviews of motor cycling in the equally excellent Leicester Phoenix MCC website [lpmcc.net](http://lpmcc.net) (I strongly recommend a visit to [lpmcc.net](http://lpmcc.net) which is a unique cornucopia of stories and pics devoted to motor cycling rallying, touring and club life). Francois and LPMCC editor Ben have allowed me to reproduce those features here. They include chapters on the earliest motor cycle races, women motor cyclists and so much more. I found them entrancing and hope you will too.*

*As Francois is responsible for the words and pictures on this page it seems apposite to tell you something of his motor cycling credentials. Since 1970s he's done several hundred rallies throughout Europe and found time to write for Europe Moto Magazine and the daily newspaper La Montagne Centre France. Having founded the Gueux d'Route movement in the late '70s he edited its monthly rally mag and organized a good number of road riding events. Nowadays he lives in Thailand but still gets to French rallies as and when.*

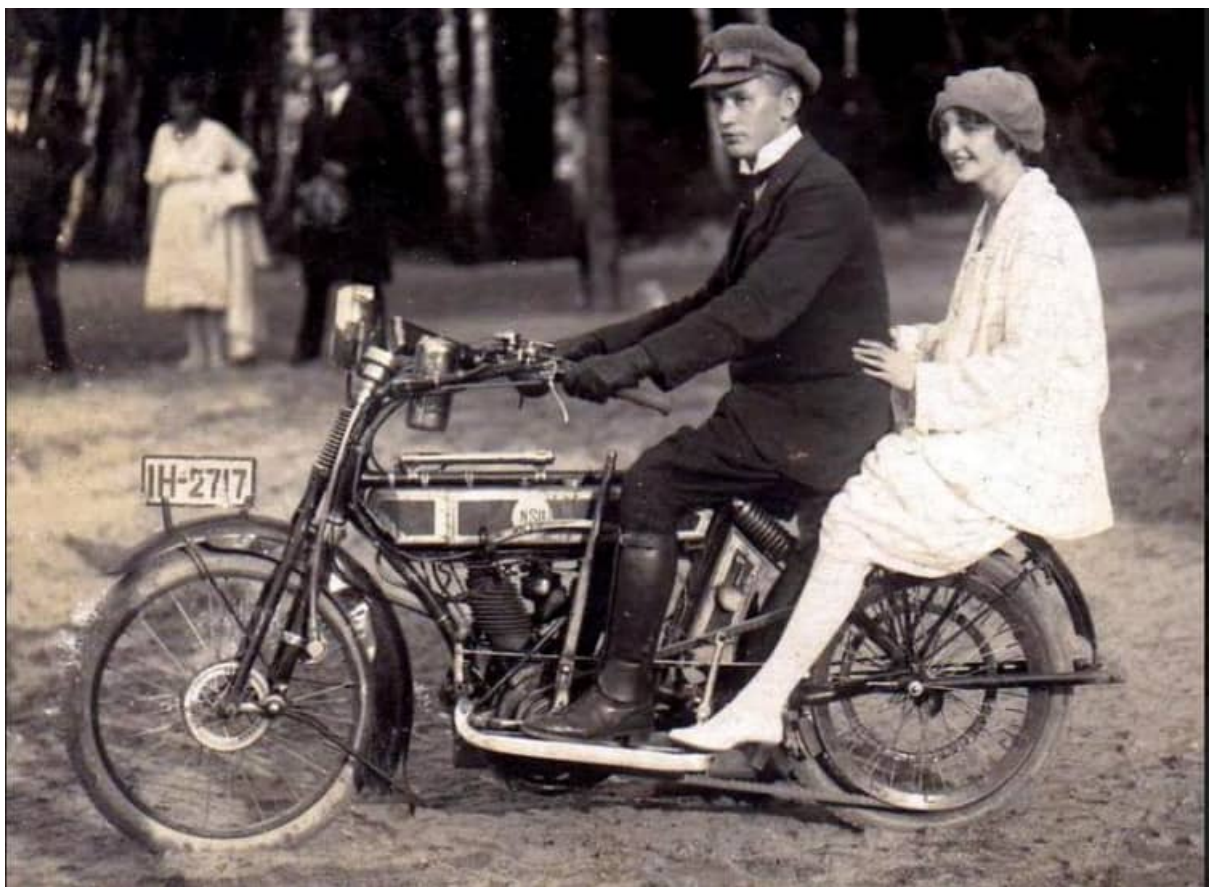
*Francois, mon ami, over to you...*

### **Memories of Yesteryear. Part 1: Motorcyclists**

ALTHOUGH MOST OF THE MOTORCYCLISTS of yesteryear depicted in these shots weren't rallyists in the literal sense of the word, they were nevertheless keen motorcyclists like you and me, and amongst them were undoubtedly some true enthusiasts. Whatever these motorcyclists of days gone by used their machines for; social, domestic or competition doesn't matter; the common brotherhood that binds us all remains the same. Whether it's their pose, the outfits they wore or the machines themselves, everything perfectly reflects the atmosphere of the time on two or three wheels.







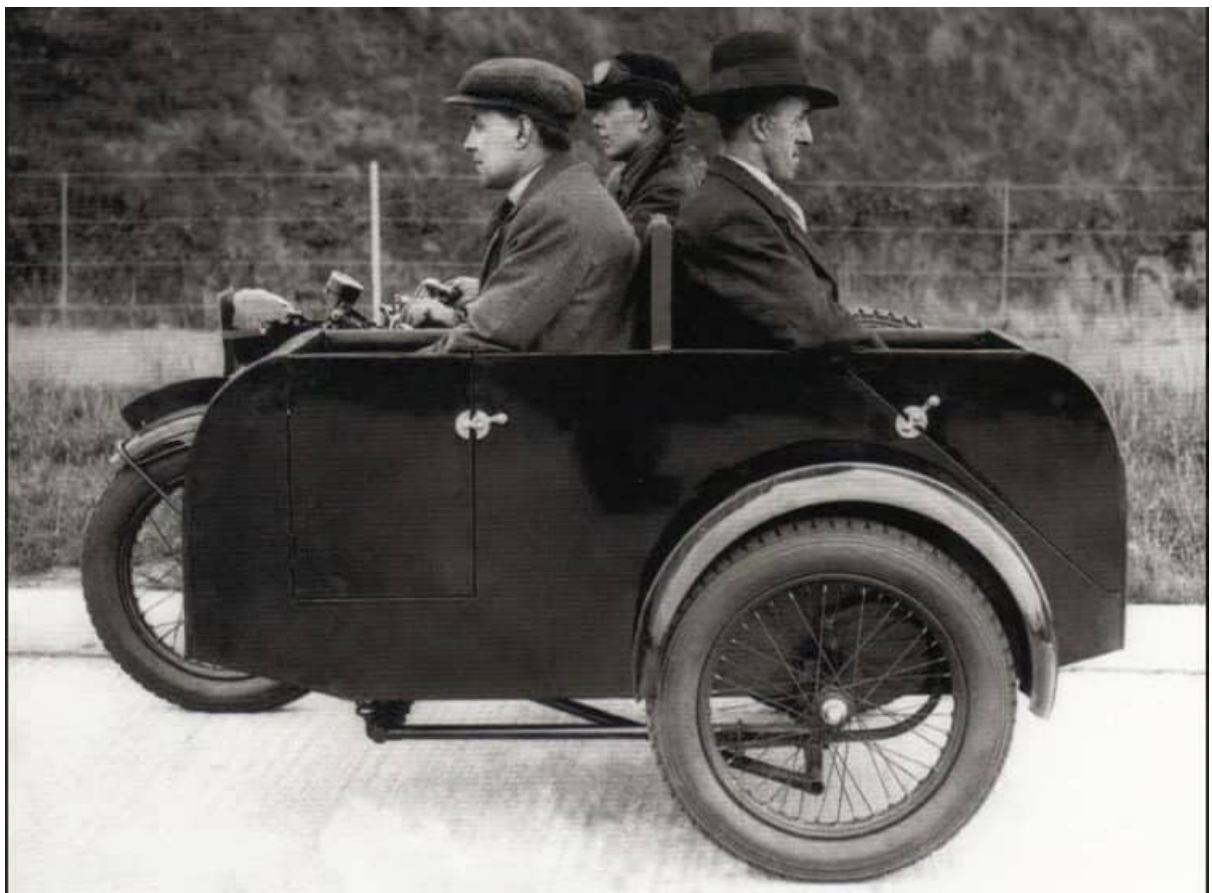
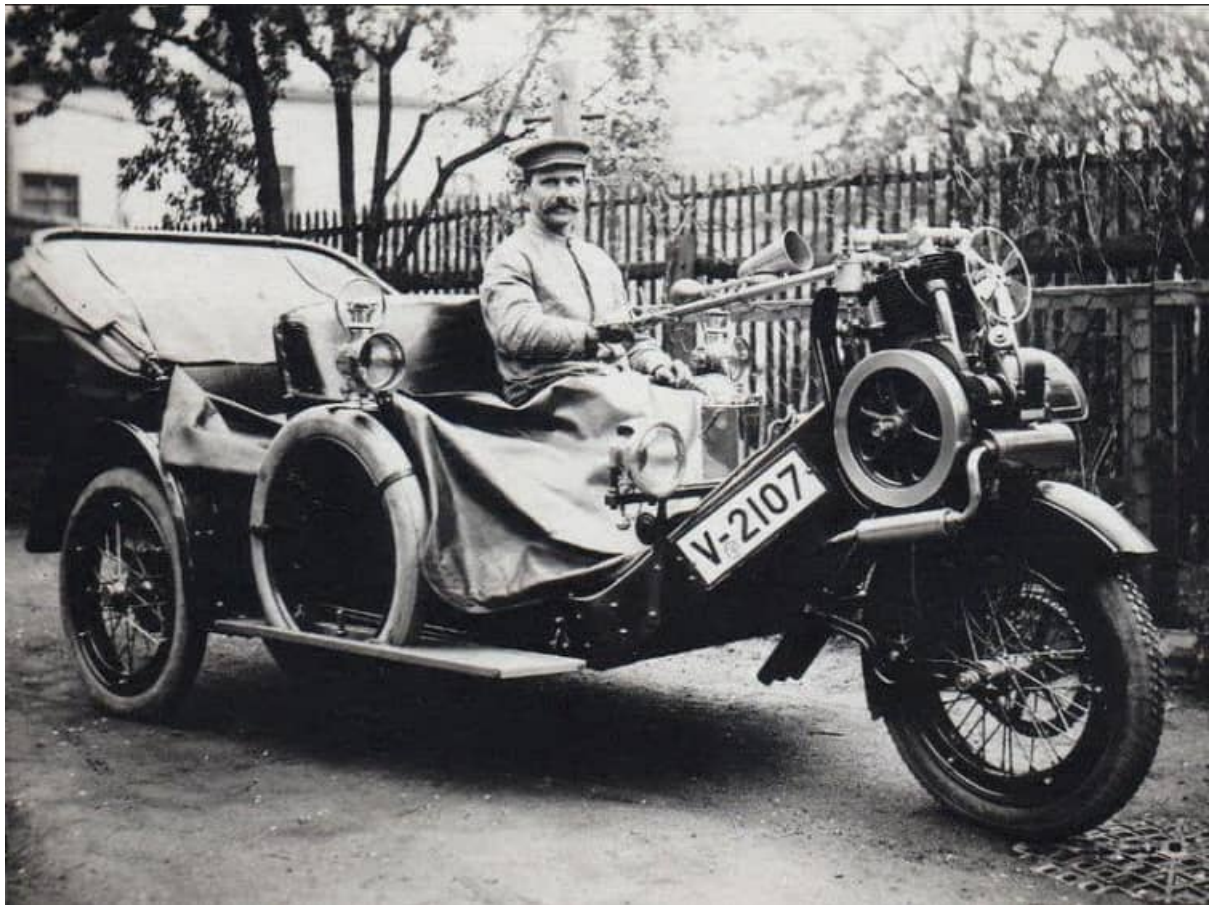


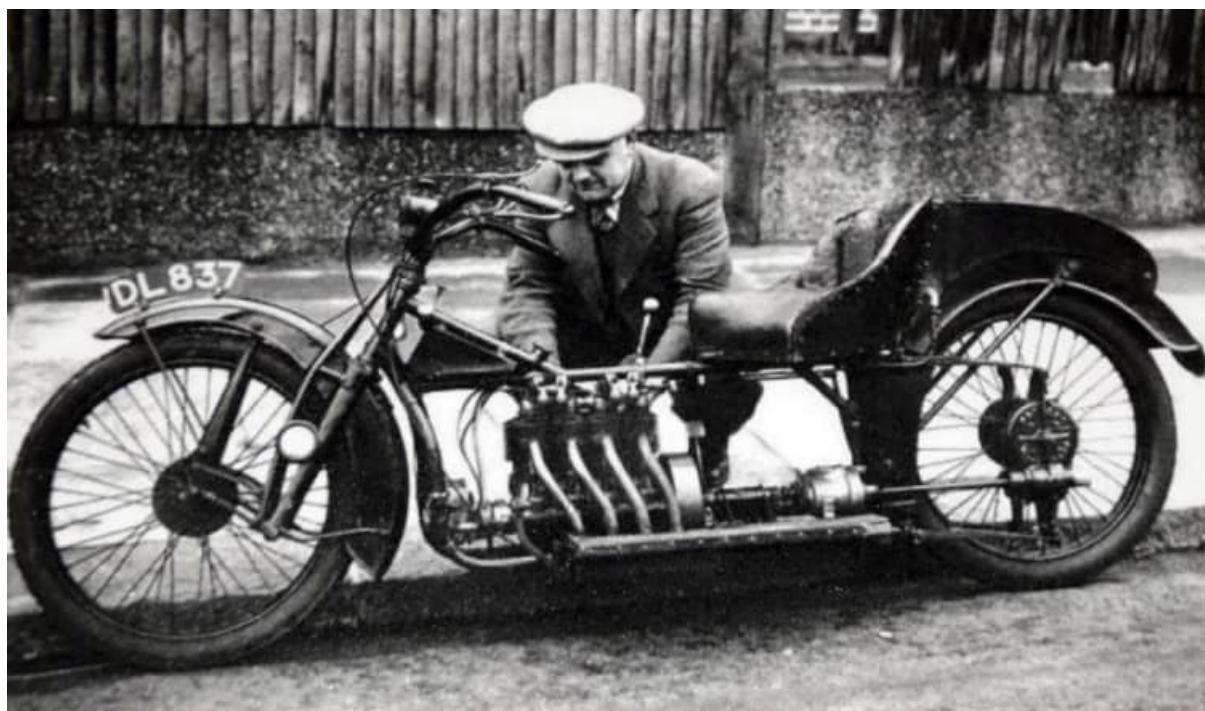










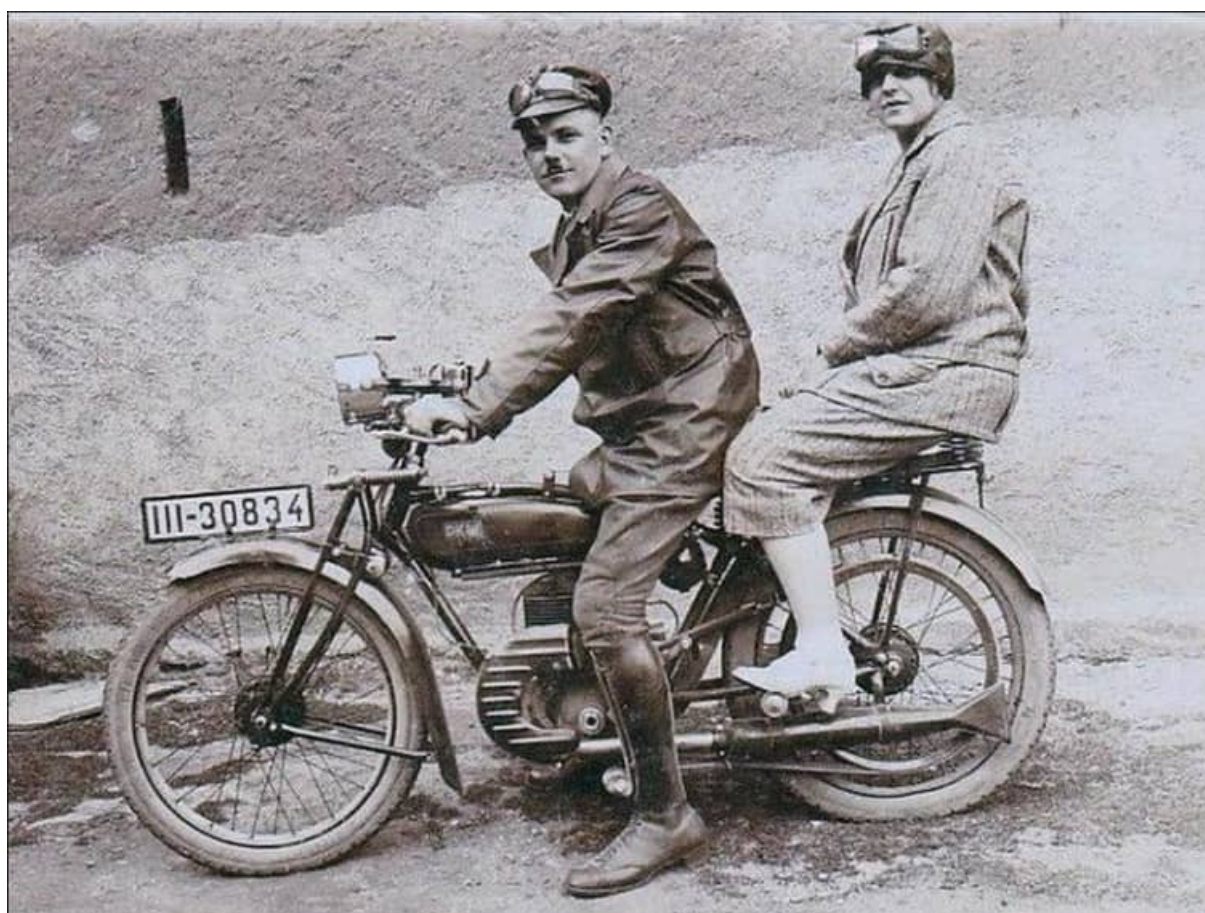




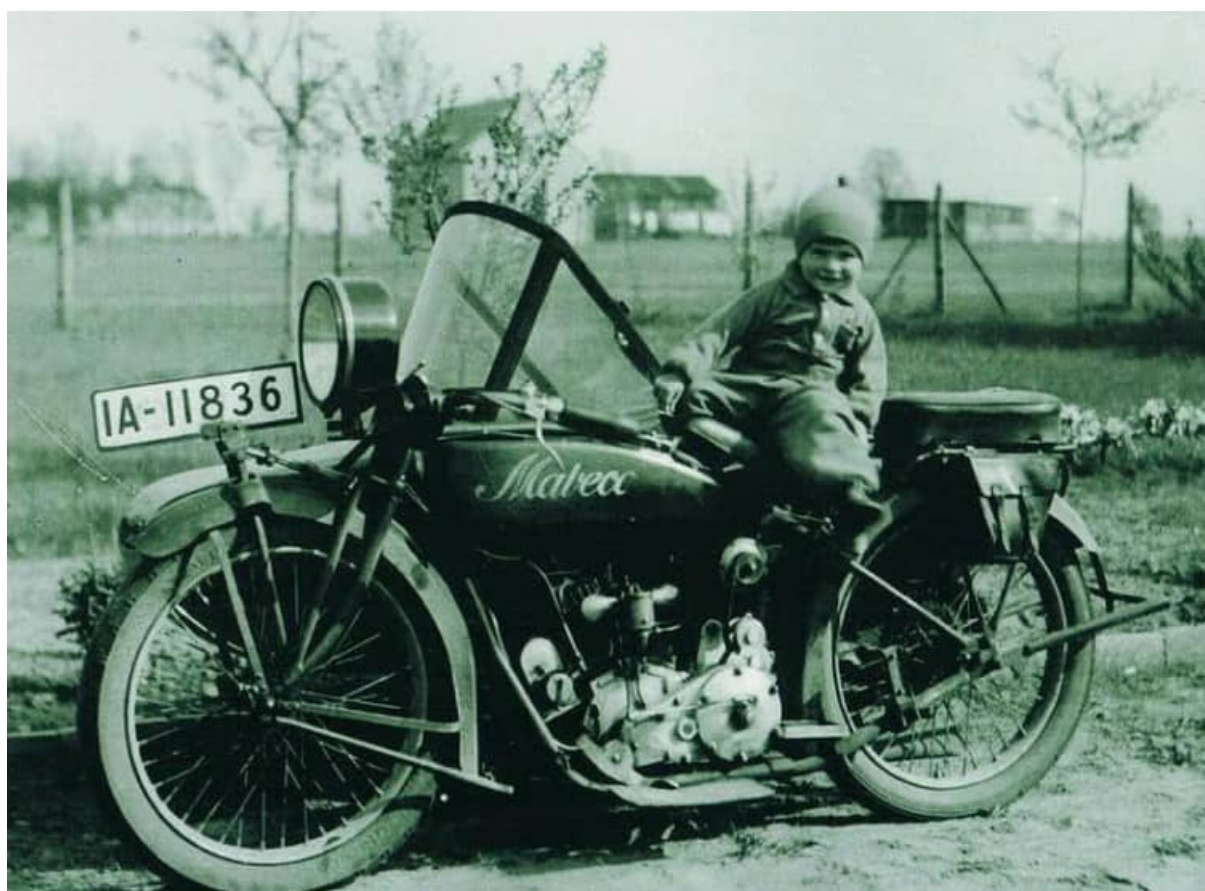
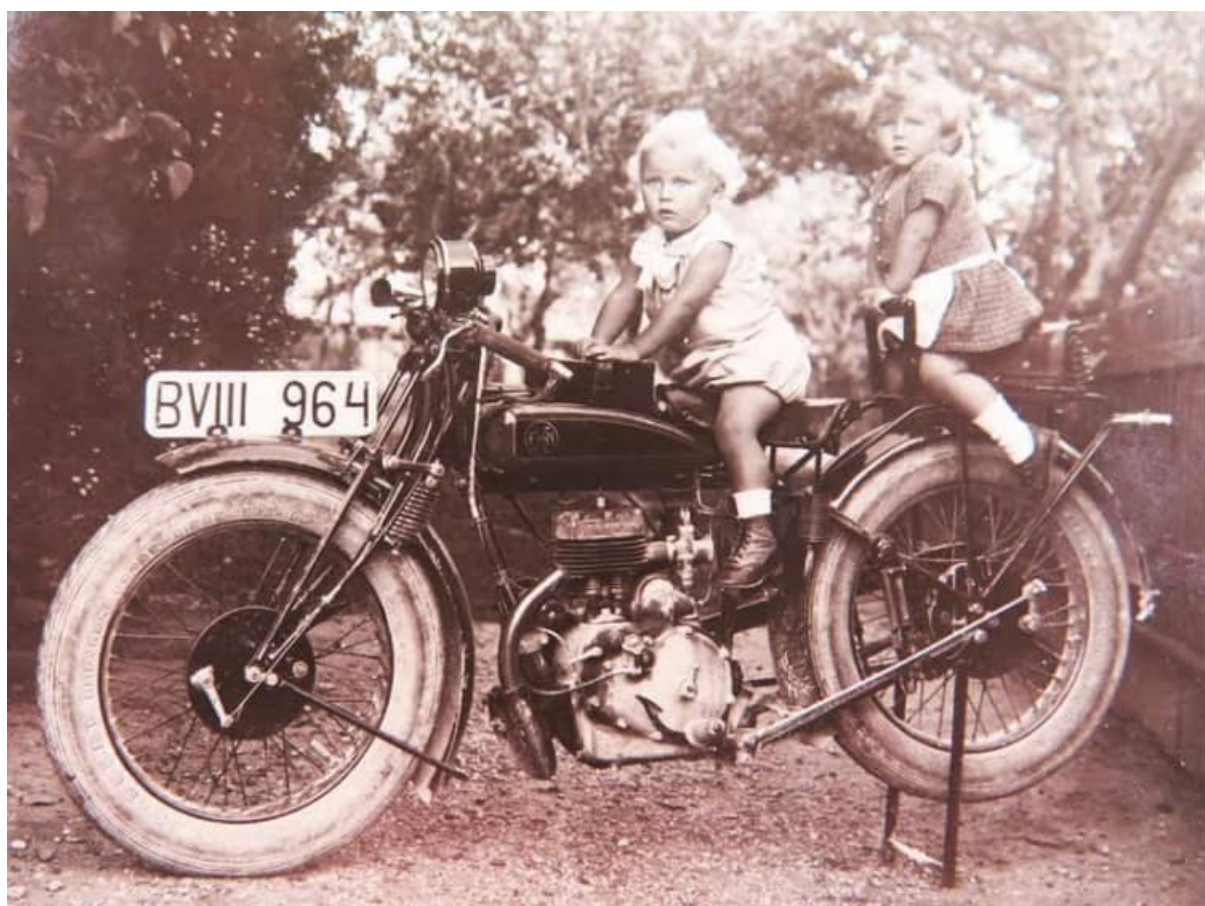
















## **Memories of Yesteryear. Part 2: Speed racers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries**

FROM THE VERY BEGINNING, the pioneers of motorcycling used their machines simply to enable them to move from one place to another, but on unreliable machines and unmade tracks that passed for roads, this proved extremely difficult at times. Imagine riding at the end of the 19th century on mechanical monsters comprised of a simple frame, rudimentary engine, small tank and a primitive saddle; all with pretty non-existent brakes, and then launching yourself at full speed down roads with no smooth tarmac and no road signs!

The motorcycle owes much of its early development to WW1, when the motorbike became an indispensable military transport vehicle. Later at the end of the 1960s and early 1970s it became the symbol of freedom we acknowledge today, but the motorcycle has also benefited throughout its history from competitions which fostered innovation in design and performance. I have set out below a brief history of motorcycle competitions from the very first participation of motorcyclists in a race in Italy in 1895 to the first World Motorcycle Championship in Belgium in 1905.

### **1895**

May 18, 1895 sees the very first record of motorcyclists in a race. Indeed, two motorcycles and three cars participated in the Italian race Turin-Asti-Turin. The following month, from June 11 to 13, two motorised two-wheelers were on the starting line of the Paris-Bordeaux-Paris race, but neither of them reached the finish. Paul Millet fell during his outward journey to Orléans and Georges Osmont had to retire in Angoulême on the return leg.

## **1896**

The following year, in May 1896, a certain M Lotz on a Hildebrand & Wolfmüller machine finished the first stage of the Bordeaux-Agen-Bordeaux in last position and subsequently retired. On September 20, 1896, eight riders competed in the Paris-Mantes-Paris.

## **1897**

From the year in which the word 'motorcycle' was coined by the Werner brothers, things got better for French riders. In the first Critérium des Motocycles, organised on April 4, 1897, Léonce Girardot and Gaston Rivierre finished in 4th position on a two-seater, two-wheeler of unknown brand and on June 20, 1897, in the first Coupe des Motocycles, run between Saint-Germain and Ecquevilly, Gans de Fabrice managed to ride his two-wheeler Wolfmüller to second place among the competing cars. The inauguration of the Stade-Vélodrome in the Parc des Princes in Paris on July 18, 1897 was the perfect occasion for motorcycle races. Gaston Rivierre on a De Dion-Bouton motor bicycle won the first series and posted the best time of the day at 40.8km/h. That same year, the very first motor bicycle race between two riders, also on De Dions, took place in England at Sheen House.

## **1899**

For the first time a competition was exclusively open to two-wheelers. The Critérium des Motocyclettes ran from Etampes to Chartres over a distance of 100km with Eugène Labitte winning on a Pernoo. From July 16-24 the first meeting of the Tour de France Automobile was held, with 19 cars and 25 motorcycles starting a course of seven stages over 2,216km.

## **1901**

In the summer George M. Holey, one of the few American pioneers, built his first single-cylinder IOE, (inlet-over-exhaust), winning the first motorcycles-only race in the US: the Boston-New York.

## **1903**

The story of city-to-city racing ended tragically in May due to eight fatal accidents in the Paris-Madrid. A new form of racing then appeared, but this time in a velodrome. These events were held most of the time at the Parc des Princes and at the Vélodrome d'Hiver. The two great champions of the age were Alessandro Anzani and Marius Thé.

## **1904**

On September 25 the newly formed Motorcycle-Club of France (MCM) organised the very first international motorcycle race: the International Cup. It ran over 268km, with the French team competing against four others: Germany (DMV), Austria (ÖAC), Great-Britain (ACC) and Denmark. The resulting French victory gave the host the right to organise the race again in 1905. Following this event, delegations from the five countries



taking part met on December 21 at the famous Ledoyen restaurant in Paris to create the International Federation of Motorcycle Clubs (FICM), the ancestor of the current FIM.

### **1905**

September brought the first World Motorcycle Championship organised inside the Zurenborg velodrome near Antwerp, in Belgium. Alessandro Anzani, won the race on an Alcyon equipped with a 330cc Buchet single-cylinder engine he developed himself, thus becoming the first world champion in the history of motorcycling. Born in Italy, Anzani moved to France in 1900 and became the most important engine manufacturer of the time.

I guess these great old timers, racing over a hundred years ago, must have possessed enormous courage and daring, to be able to challenge their competitors on such unpredictable machines, in the most crazy of events. Take a good look at them on the images below, testaments to the outfits of the day with their handlebar moustaches and daredevil appearance. The real men of yesteryear who knew no fear. I have only one word to say about them: Respect!



This is what we called an engine at that time...imagine the noise in that open exhaust!



Alessandro Anzani, the first world champion in the history of motorcycling.

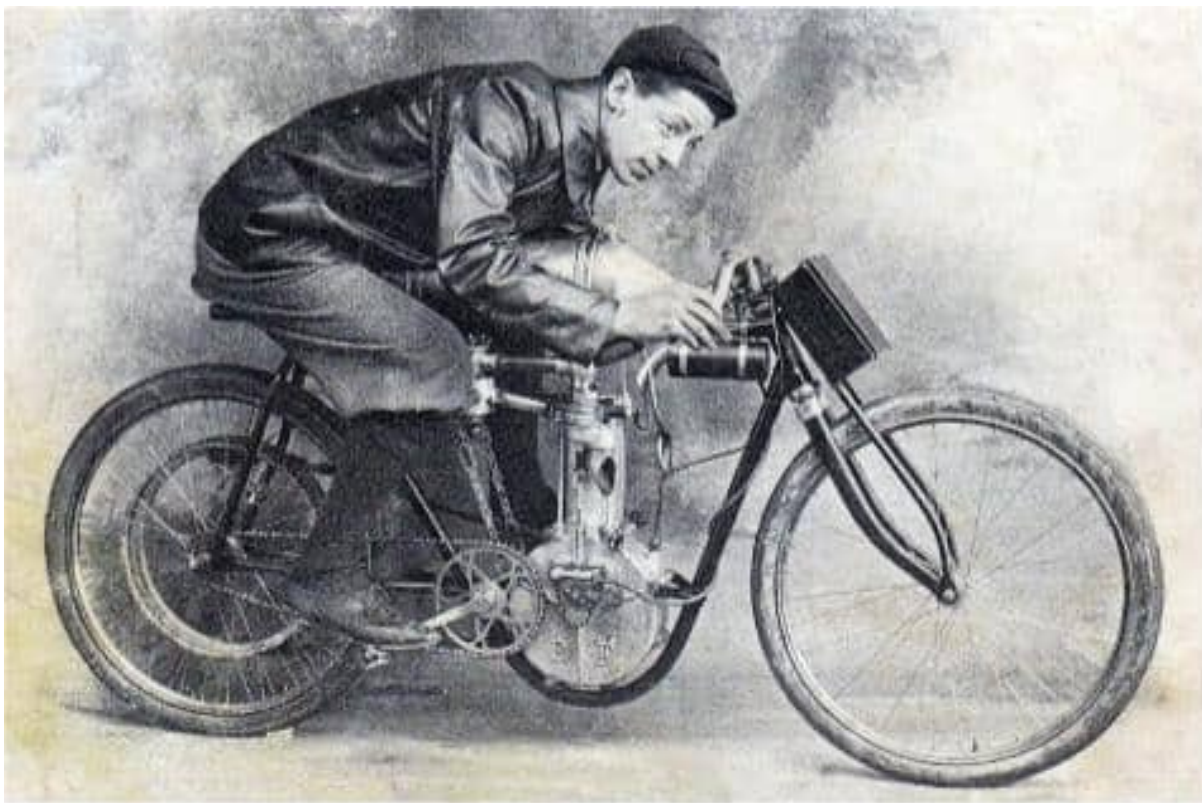




Marius Thé's greatest win was in 1904 when he won the Grand Prix de la République, then organised both at the Parc des Princes and at the Vélodrome d'Hiver, ahead of Alessandro Anzani (Alcyon) and Joseph Collomb (Magali).



1904: Marius Thé on a prototype twin-cylinder two-litre Buchet.

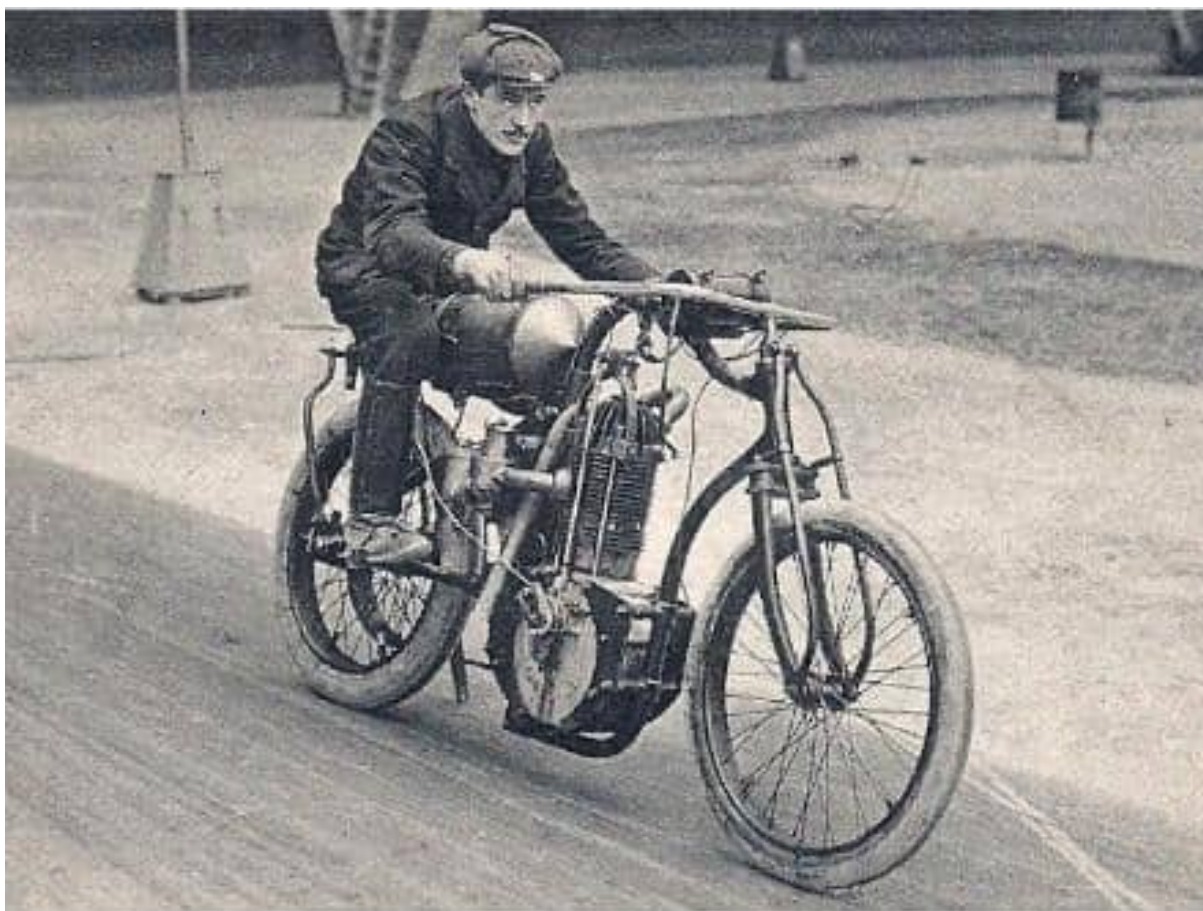


1903: The champion Brault.





Naso, another good racer of the time.



Chauny, also a Parc des Princes public favorite.





Outfits were not left out.

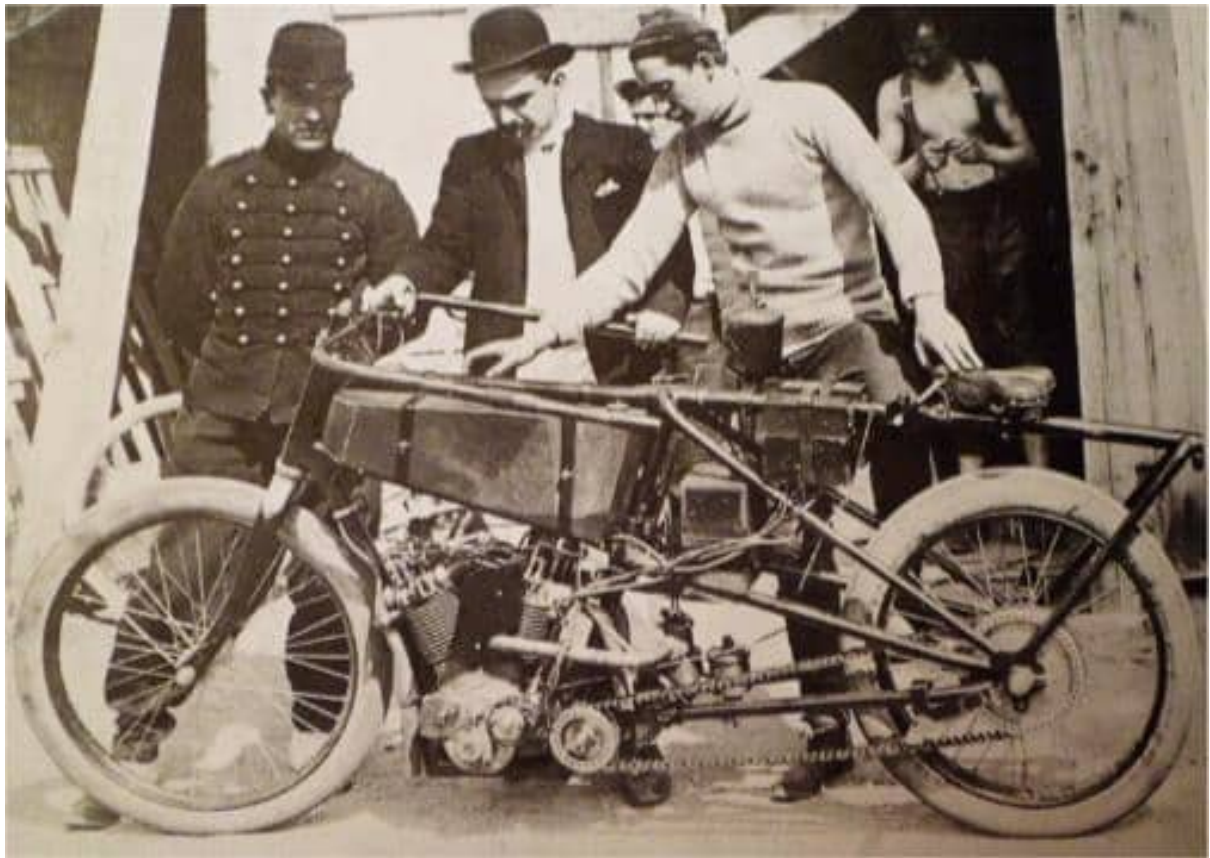


In a sport said to be dominated by men, Fernande Clouet was the first French female racer to take part in track and road races on a Giorgia Knapp motorcycle, but also on Harley Davidson.





Lanfranchi, winner of the Coupe Hydra and holder of the 250cc 100km record.



1903: Maurice Fournier and his V4 Clément.





Road racing in Amiens, Northern France.



1905: The Coupe du Motorcycle Club de France.





1905: A front seat tricycle known as 'kills the mother-in-law'. The engine is a Villemain with opposite valves, liquid cooling and direct chain transmission.



1909: Will Cook (NLG with JAP engine).





Ravelli (Peugeot) at the Gaillon hill-climb.



Andre Grapperon.

### **Memories of Yesteryear. Part 3: 1914-1918—The Great War in the saddle**

IT WAS DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR that the military motorcycle made its debut, although it had also appeared with the forces of Pancho Villa in the earlier Mexican Revolution. Pancho Villa discovered that the big Indian motorcycles were ideal for his raiding parties, realising that motorcycles offered the speed and agility ideal for hit-and-run raids. The Great War set the tone for the mechanisation of war and the motorcycle proved to be a very viable replacement for the horse, with the military making extensive use of this new method of transport and communication. Technological breakthroughs are often driven by necessity during war and the Great War was no exception. The increased need for motorised transport unsurprisingly directly influenced motorbike production, greatly accelerating their evolution. These were bikes built out of, and during a crisis—bikes designed for rugged applications. It's no coincidence that many early motorcycle manufacturers were also manufacturers of guns and armaments. Detailed below is a photographic record of some of those military machines of yesteryear.





A civilian and his children prior to Germany declaring war on the Russian Empire (August 1, 1914). Two days later Germany declared war on France and invaded Belgium. On August 4 the UK engaged its colonial empire in the conflict.



The requisition of motorcycles in Paris. In France, general mobilisation ensured the immediate right of requisition on people and goods. All motorcycle owners, (the ideal

liaison vehicles), were required by law to present their machines to the authorities and motorcycles were systematically requisitioned.



Two British dispatch riders receiving information from a French sentry. Dispatch riders had the dangerous and demanding job of delivering messages to the front lines and carrying out reconnaissance work. Motorcycles were of course very maneuverable and able to get in and out of tight locations impassable to other vehicles. [*Entente cordiale: The DR with the Duggie and the fag could hardly look more British; the sentry with the formidable bayonet and equally formidable soup strainer could hardly look more French.—Ed*].



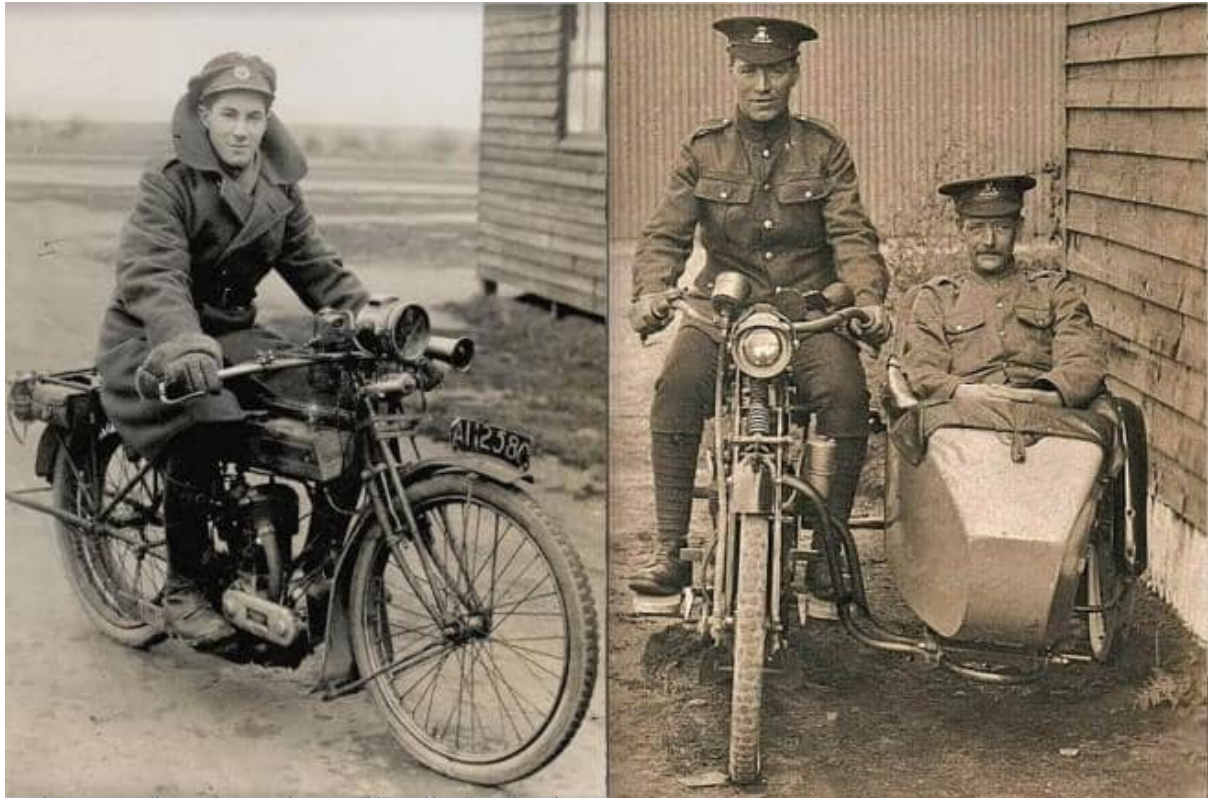


Two Royal Engineers dispatch riders on their Triumphs. Triumph motorcycles were started in Britain by a German immigrant from Nuremberg called Siegfried Bettmann who set up his business in Coventry and also later a German branch in Nuremberg. Before the outbreak of war, the two companies were set up to operate under different names. In Britain they were called Triumph whilst in Nuremberg the brand was TWN, (Triumph Werke Nürnberg).



A belt-driven Douglas. Manufacturers Douglas, Triumph, Royal Enfield, Norton, BSA, Matchless, Sunbeam, Scott, Clyno, Lackburne, Rover, New Hudson, Hazlewood, Phelon & Moore, Zenith, Lewis, Kynoch and Torpedo all contributed bikes to the British war effort. It's estimated that Douglas alone produced 70,000 bikes for the allied forces. Of these, 25,000 were 348cc twin-cylinder machines, specially made for the army's newly mobile dispatch riders. Triumph, meanwhile, boasted a British order for 30,000, though it also supplied Greek dispatch riders with 550cc single-engine bikes. Royal Enfield also manufactured for the UK war department; notably winning a contract to supply the Russians too.





British soldiers and their machines. Carburetors were obviously very crude, and so more often than not there would tend to be problems with carburetion ignition systems, especially in arduous or damp conditions. Usually in the sidecars there would be petrol, oil and carbide for the lamps.



A soldier of the Signal Corps and his Douglas in the snow on the road to St Pol sur Ternoise, Northern France. The belt drive transmission was quite smooth as there was no chain to jerk about. But if it rained hard or if you were trying to ride in the snow, the belt would probably slip, sliding around on the pulleys. Riders used to have a ready supply of sand which they could simply sprinkle over the belt and pulleys to regain grip. If they found themselves in the countryside, then they'd simply sprinkle some earth over the belt.

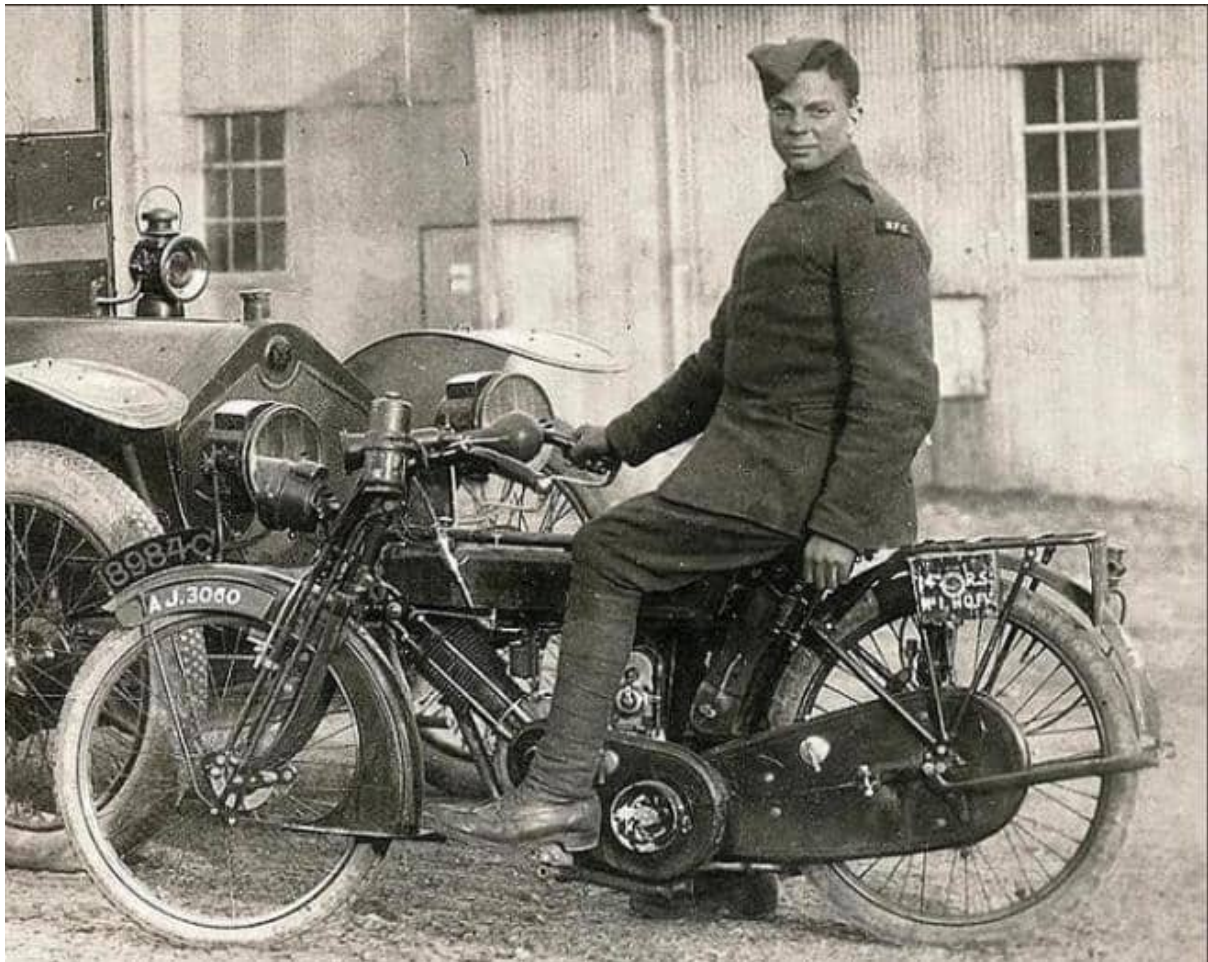




A version of the Douglas as a radiophonic liaison station.



A workshop sidecar, also practical as the mechanic's bathroom.



Phelon & Moore brand was the official marque of the Royal Flying Corps and then of the Royal Air Force. Three models were in service: the rarest being the 770cc V-twin; the most famous was the 500cc sloper (pictured); and a third model with a sidecar.





1916—A Royal Flying Corps NCO with a customised P&M equipped with two carbide headlights and racing style handlebars.



1915—RFC ace Albert Ball VC, DSO & Two Bars, MC (44 air battle victories) on a Hazlewood-JAP. During the war Hazlewoods suspended motorcycle production to concentrate on armaments.





A Zenith Gradua (under Norton control from 1914 to 1918), with variable pulley JAP 650cc V-twin engine. On the bike is Captain Denis Carey of the Royal Naval Air Service, who threw the hammer for Great Britain in the 1912 Olympic Games, finishing a creditable 6th.



A French postcard with the title “French remember!” Showing the arrival of English soldiers and their motorcycles in Peronne, in the Somme, during the reconquest of France in 1917.



Repainted and without any other modification than a registration number on the tank, the requisitioned Peugeot twins were the French motor cycles most often found in the hands of French soldiers. First installed in Vincennes, the motorised military park was transferred to the Montluçon artillery park, where the first motor cycle sections were formed, equipped with new machines from Clément-Gladiator, (two or three dozen), and Triumph (one hundred); the only two brands selected by the park manager.





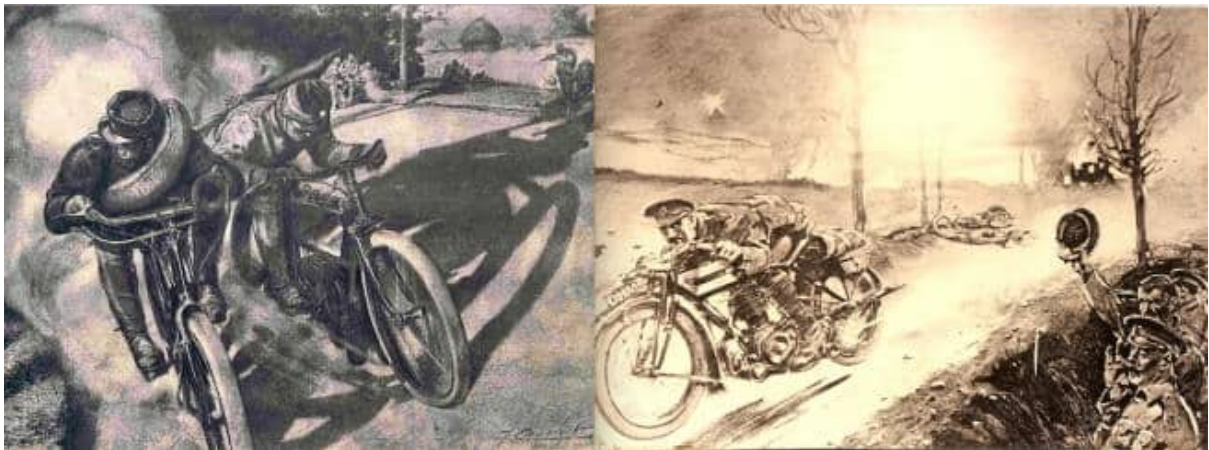
December 1914—French soldiers on Triumphs. The machines are identical but '480' was obviously requisitioned because we can just about see the remains of a civilian registration on the front fender.



The French motor cycle soldier of the Great War had a soft spot for British motorcycles because the French requisition motor cycles, already few in number, quickly reached their limits in terms of performance and reliability.



Vintage drawings showing French dispatch riders in action during the Great War.



*...and here are two more, of another French DR and one of his Tommy comrades—Ed.*





French soldiers at the front, (seen here with a BSA outfit). All wore the 'kepi' when on duty; the 'calot' (field service) is worn at rest. The metal helmet did not appear until 1915, when trench warfare began, which was responsible for many fatal head injuries.



Circa 1915—French soldiers and their machines in ambush. The gaudy color of their uniforms, their helmets, and their machines at the time didn't help with camouflage...





The first German motorcycles to make their way to the front lines were the Wanderer (left), the NSU (right) and the TWN (Triumph Werke Nürnberg).



German Wanderer machines were of advanced design boasting unit construction engines and front and rear suspension as early as 1915, at which time they were supplied to the German army. Wanderer supplied almost half of all machines used by



the German forces during the Great War, and by 1918 had built over 10,000 motor cycles. Baron Klaus-Detlof von Oertzen arranged the sale of the motorcycle business to NSU in 1929. The Wanderer design was licensed to a Czech manufacturer, resulting in the Jawa brand.



A German Wanderer equipped with a machine gun. In the summer of 1914 both sides deployed 2,000 machine guns to the front.



Although the Netherlands remained neutral during World War I the Dutch military motorcycle squad of the Royal Netherlands Army was mobilised throughout the conflict, as belligerents regularly attempted to intimidate the Netherlands and place demands on it.





The Russians were not left out with outfits also equipped with machine guns. Here are soldiers from the 39th Infantry Regiment of Tomsk.



Being at war does not prevent Easter from being celebrated with a good improvised Russian lunch and washed down with a lot of vodka...





Although Russians didn't have any motorcycle manufacturer a century ago, they were riding American motor cycles (Indians and Harley-Davidsons) during the Great War.



On April 6 1917, the United States declared war against Germany. World War I was the

first time in American history that the United States sent soldiers abroad to defend foreign soil.



The first American troops arrived in Europe in June 1917. The American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) did not fully participate at the front until October, when the First Division entered the trenches at Nancy, France.



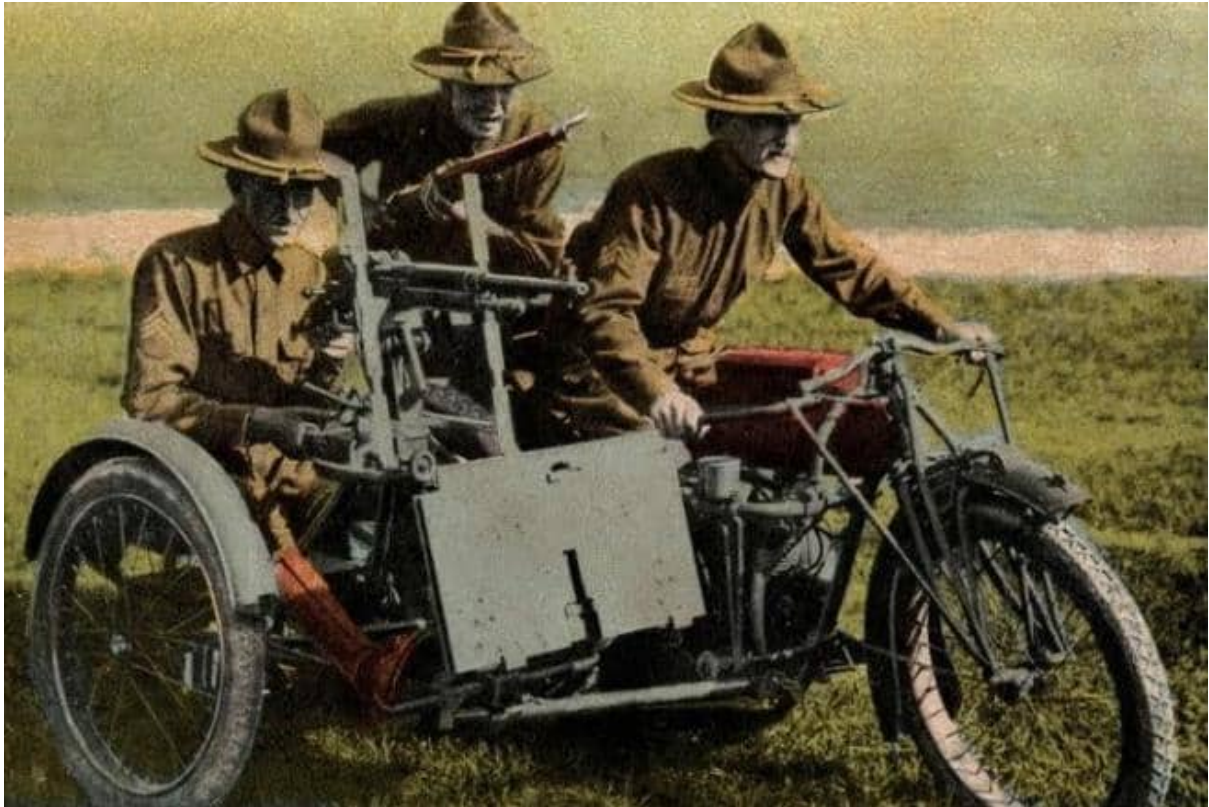
It has been estimated that the US ordered over 80,000 bikes for military use during



WWI—clearly the motorbike held an important place amongst the troops. By the end of 1917 Harley-Davidson had provided around 15,000 bikes for the war effort. Approximately one third of all Harleys made in 1917 and 1918 were bought for war use.



At the outset of World War I, Indian was at the forefront of the motorcycle world. When the US announced its entrance into the conflict, the manufacturer dedicated nearly all of its production resources to the war effort...



...The result was 50,000 Indian PowerPlus Big Twins, which were both faster and, thanks to a swanky rear suspension, more manoeuvrable than their Harley counterparts.



The American army in France, in Saint-Nazaire. The first 14,000 US infantry troops landed in France at the port of Saint-Nazaire, Brittany. The landing site had been kept



secret because of the menace of German submarines.



Motorcycle ambulances were an innovation in WW1, used by the British, French and American militaries, as well as non-governmental support groups like the Red Cross.



Four-wheeled ambulances were very heavy, underpowered, poorly suspended and used solid tyres, making them slow, unwieldy, bumpy and likely to get stuck in the rough, muddy ground common near European battlefields. Smaller, lighter ambulances were required, and motor cycles with sidecars proved useful near the front lines to move wounded soldiers away from the heat of battle.





American forces and the Red Cross used Indian and Harley-Davidson motor cycles for ambulance and medical transport duties. Both makes had reliable motors and three-speed gearboxes with robust clutches, and were very lightweight. The faster an injured soldier was treated, the more likely he was to survive, so getting them away from the front as quickly as possible was crucial.



No, he's not a motorcyclist on his way to a rally at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic! Armies quickly produced gas masks that gave protection as long as sufficient warning was given of a gas attack. The total number of military and civilian casualties in World War I was around 40 million. Estimates range from around 15 to 22 million deaths and about 23 million wounded military personnel, ranking it amongst the deadliest conflicts in human history. Disease, including the 1918 flu pandemic (and deaths while held as prisoners of war) accounted for about one third of total military deaths. To put things in perspective, the confirmed global virus deaths due to the current coronavirus pandemic, on April 5 2021, is around 2.8 million.

*Francois has also sent me a good selection of uncaptioned pics from the Great War; these, with a number that I've accumulated, can be found in the Illustrative Melange. And, of course, there are plenty of stories and images from the war in the main Timeline—Ed.*

#### **Memories of Yesteryear. Part 4: 1920-1925—The post Great War era**

LIKE IT OR NOT, THERE IS NOTHING LIKE WAR, however unfair and murderous, to advance technology. This is unfortunately as true today as it was 100 years ago in terms of the motorcycle evolution after the Great War. The war revealed the usefulness of motorcycles, recognising them as practical and relatively reliable. This, together with the increasing popularity of competition motorcycling in the early 1920s, thanks to further improvements in Reliability and handling, led to more advances on the technical front. I



would love to go into greater documented detail on this extremely interesting period, but the aim of this article is to present a more visual record, which I hope you will agree is more interesting than straightforward facts and figures; allowing me to share a greater number of photos in the limited space available. In a nutshell, let's summarise a few highlights from the 1920s: George Brough, the second son of motorcycle pioneer William Edward Brough, set up his own factory in Nottingham in 1919 to produce what he called the Brough Superior range of motorcycles and motor cars. He brought together the best components he could find and added distinctive styling details and in 1922, he rode a Brough Superior SS9-Brough Superior SS80 managing an unofficial 100mph (160km/h) lap. The industrial production of motorcycles was dominated by England, but by 1920, Harley-Davidson became the largest manufacturer worldwide with their motorcycles being sold through dealers in 67 countries. DKW in Germany took over as the largest manufacturer in the late 1920s. BMW motorcycles came on the scene in 1923 with a shaft drive and an opposed-twin. As motorcycles got faster, the need for protective clothing grew, and many bikers turned to the thick leather horsehide of World War I era of military overcoats. In 1928, Irving Schott, a jacket maker in New York City, created the first leather jacket specifically for motorcycling, named after his favorite cigar: The Perfecto. Now let me share the photographs I have picked out to illustrate this golden age of motorcycling in Europe in the 1920s...



1919: In Germany, solo and outfit racers on the starting line, preparing to set off in a competition.





1919: M Blauseur on a Harley-Davidson 1000, one of the competitors of the Paris-Reims-Paris race. This first great post-war race of 310km was held on 6 July.

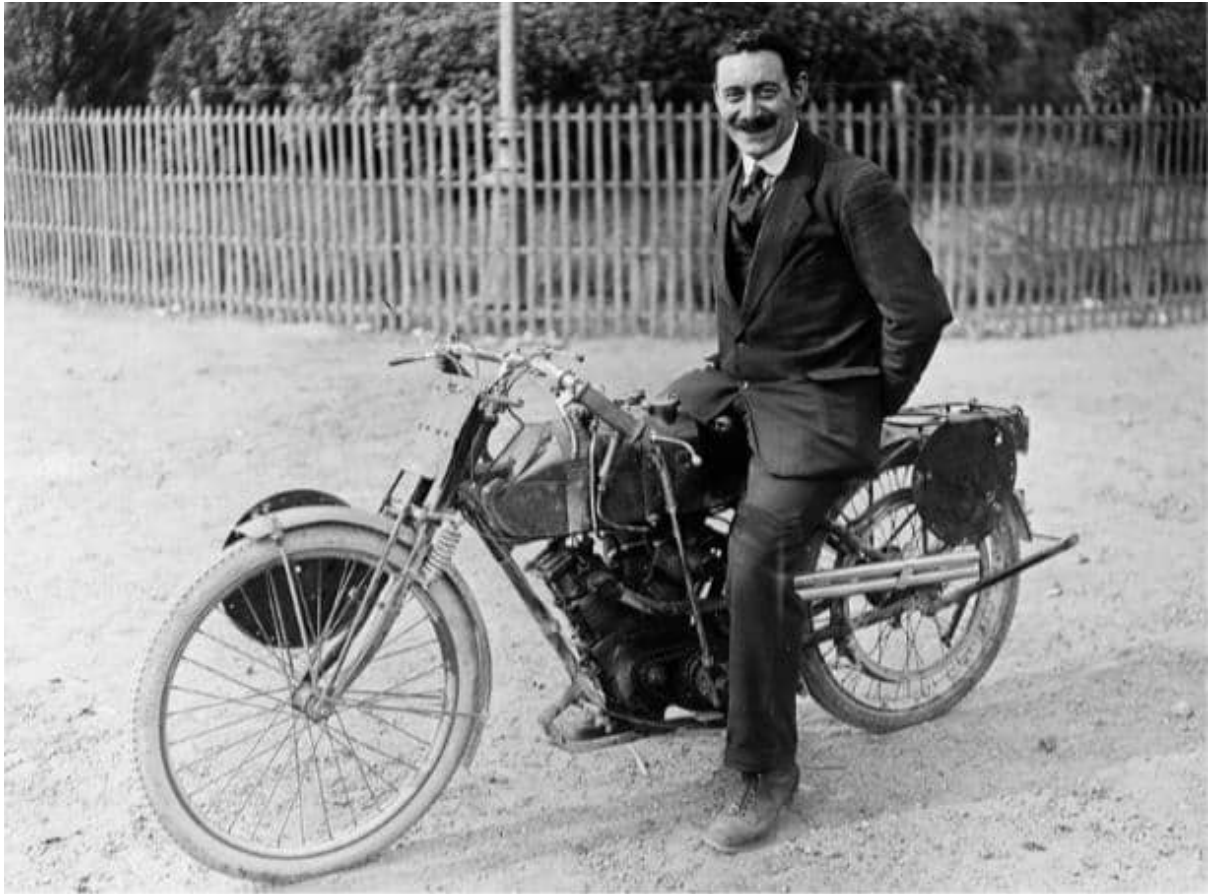


1919: M Martinez on his 750cc Triumph, another competitor in the Paris-Reims-Paris trial. Martinez would have won his class but stopped to help a fellow competitor. Clearly a real sportsman.





1919: Paul Péan on a Peugeot at the Paris-Reims-Paris race. Peugeot only entered one machine but the firm's confidence in its reliability was justified —Péan finished 1st equal in his class without incurring any penalty points. Hutchinson supplied tyres to all but one of the class winners.



1920: M Milland on his Motosacoche, at the inaugural Circuit de la Sarthe (aka Le Mans). The UMF (Union Motocycliste de France) organised a motorcycle grand prix on a triangular course from the Pontlieue suburbs of Le Mans, along public roads to Mulsanne and back again. The circuit measured more than 10 miles and was clearly no picnic—of 31 starters, only four made it to the end.





1920: M Robert, also on a Motosacoche, at the Circuit de la Sarthe GP.



1920: Jim Davis won the 1920 300-mile Dodge City race on 4 July. Davis started riding motor cycles at when he was 11 and earned his first factory ride, with Indian, aged 19 in 1915. He went on to win 21 AMA National Championships—including the first race ever sanctioned by the AMA at Toledo, Ohio, on 26 July, 1924—and more than 50 non-AMA titles. It's a record that will never be equalled. By the time Davis retired in 1936 he had raced in more than 1,500 events and covered an astounding 30,000 competition miles. Not only did he survive the board-track era, he survived into the 21st century, passing away on 5 February 2000 at the age of 103.



Henry Hammond Springs of Atlanta, GA., pictured at the Indian factory in Springfield, Mass, was a top rider for the Indian Tribe, a local hero in Atlanta, and a crowd favourite. He joined the Indian factory team at 17, competing across the USA. Hammond was another remarkable young talent who dedicated his life to racing motor cycles, and like so many competitors from that time he lost his life in the pursuit of victory, dying of injuries sustained in a race at South Bend, Indiana on 31 May 1922.

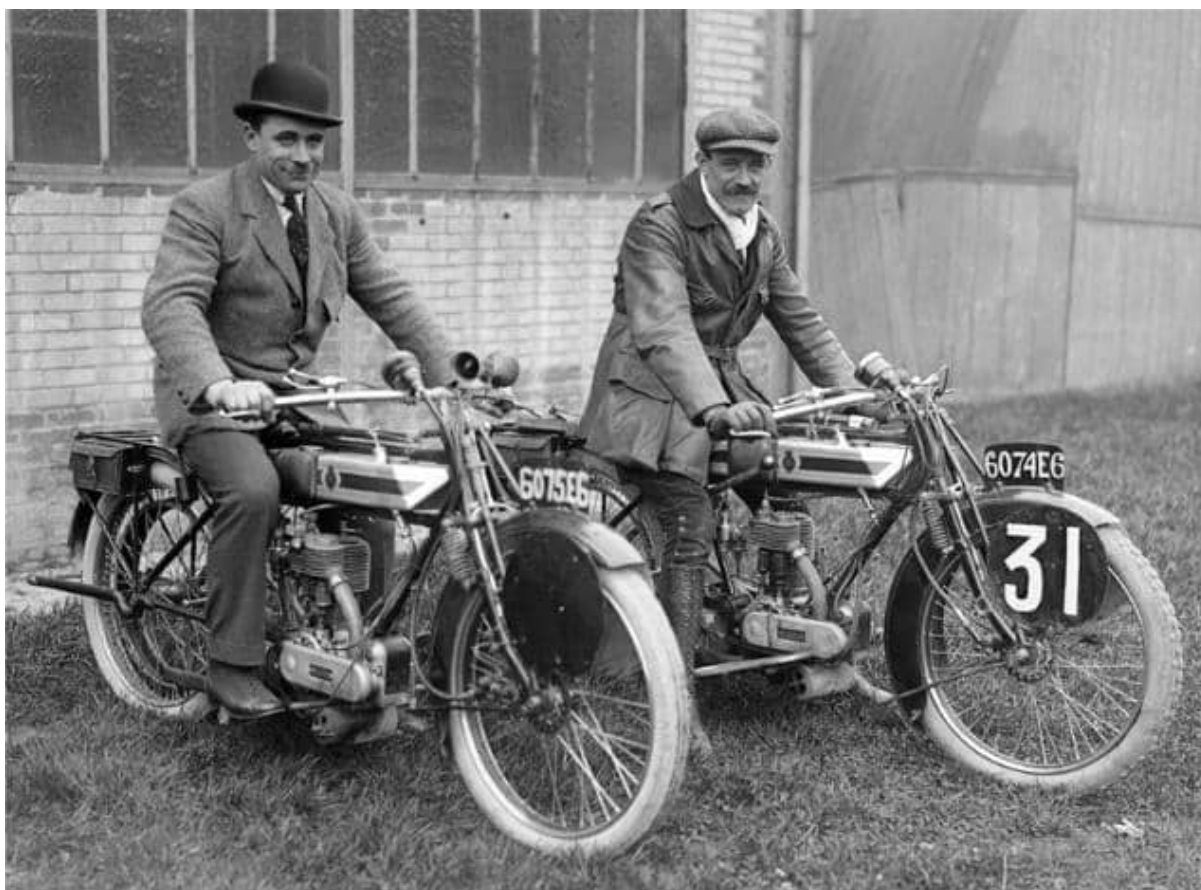




1921: M Dooer on a Motosacoche at the Paris-Nice trial. He was one of 93 competitors representing the biggest French, Belgian, English, Italian and American marques. The Paris-Nice dates back to the spring of 1913. It was held again in 1914 and resumed after the war in 1920. The 1,200km course ran from Montgeron via Dijon, Lyon, Marseille and Nice.







1921: The Sarolea team, Messrs Duverne and Lefèvre, at the Marly-le-Roi trial organised by the UMF.

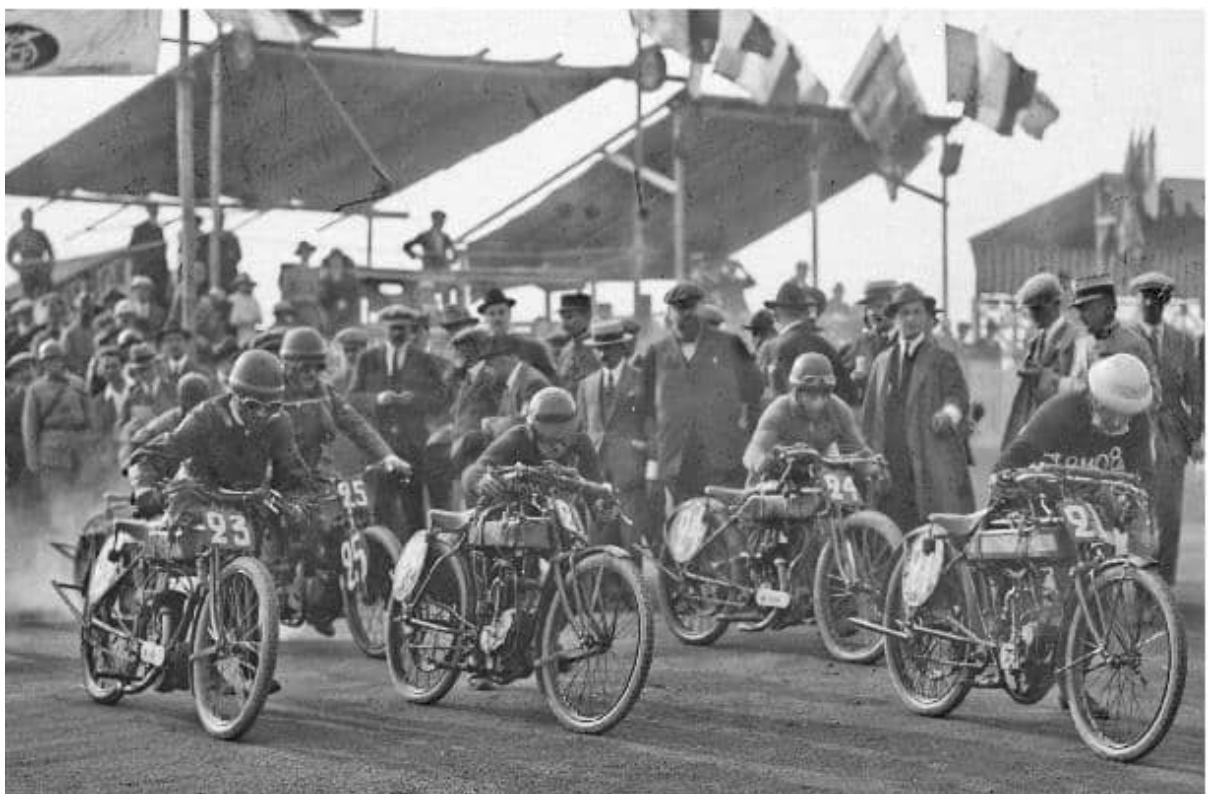


1922: Start of the 500cc race at the Grand Prix de Nations at the Monza circuit, Italy. Construction of the Monza Autodrome was started in January by the Milan Automobile Club to mark the 25th anniversary of the club's founding. The track was officially opened on a rainy 3 September. This was followed on 8 September by the motor cycle Grand Prix de Nations with factory honours going to Amedeo Ruggeri on a Harley Davidson 1,000 and Gnesa with a two-stroke Garelli 350 in the 500cc class.





1922: M Meunier with his Alcyon at the Grand Prix de France in Montargis. Note the extraordinary set-up of the pit stop and the outfits of both the racer and his team!



1922: Start of the 250cc class (10.83km x 30 laps) at the French GP, organised by the

MCF at Montargis.



1922: On 27 October Bert Le Vack made history by lapping Brooklands at 100.29mph on this 980cc Zenith. He was nicknamed the Wizard of Brooklands, for his exploits around the famous track. Le Vack was widely regarded as one of the best motor cyclists of his generation. He was also a leading tuner who developed a range of world beating engines from 250cc to 1000cc. He used these engines in a range of machines, including Brough Superior, Zenith, New Imperial, Coventry Eagle and HRD. He was killed while riding a Motosachoché sidecar outfit on the public road in Switzerland in 1931.





1922: Italian racers at the Grand Prix de Strasbourg. From left: Gnesa (Ermino), Visioli (Ottorino) and Dall'Oglio (Garelli).



1923: Women and their rides at the ACU Trials in Birmingham.



1923: M Marc (Alcyon), winner of the 350cc class in the French GP at Montargis.





1923: Alexandre Hommaire (Oriol) rode in the 600cc sidecar race at the French GP.



1923: Messrs Hufkens and Reynartz, both on Gillet, at the start of the Paris-Pyrenees-Paris trial organised by *Moto-Revue* and the newspaper *Petit Parisien*. Two mopeds, 16

solos, two combos and 15 cyclecars took part; Robert Sexé finished 3rd in the 500cc class on a Norton.



1923: François Clech (Motosolo) during the second Bol d'Or at the Loges circuit in the forest of St Germain. The Bol d'Or founded in 1922 by Eugène Mauve of the Association of Former Military Motorcyclists (AAMM) is believed to have been the world's first 24-hour race. François Clech, born in 1895, fought in the 1914-18 war as a dispatch rider on a Clément, which was probably requisitioned. After the war he joined Motosolo and won the 250cc class of the Bol d'Or in 1922 and 1923; he was crowned 250cc French champion in 1923. His career was ended by an arm injury sustained during the Six Days of Winter event in January 1928.





1923: French rider Tony Zind (Motosacoche) won the 500cc class of the Bol d'Or in 1922 and 1923.



1923: Henry Naas (500cc Gnome-Rhône) at the 22.8km Circuit de Tours during the 4th UMF Grand Prix. British riders won three classes: Geoff Davison (Levis), 250cc; Frank Longman (AJS), 350cc; and Jim Whalley (Douglas), 500cc.





1923: Moret (Oriol) won the 600cc sidecar class of the 13th GP de Lyon, at the Saint-André-de-Corcy circuit. They should have entered the 1,000cc class too—none of the big combos reached the finish line.

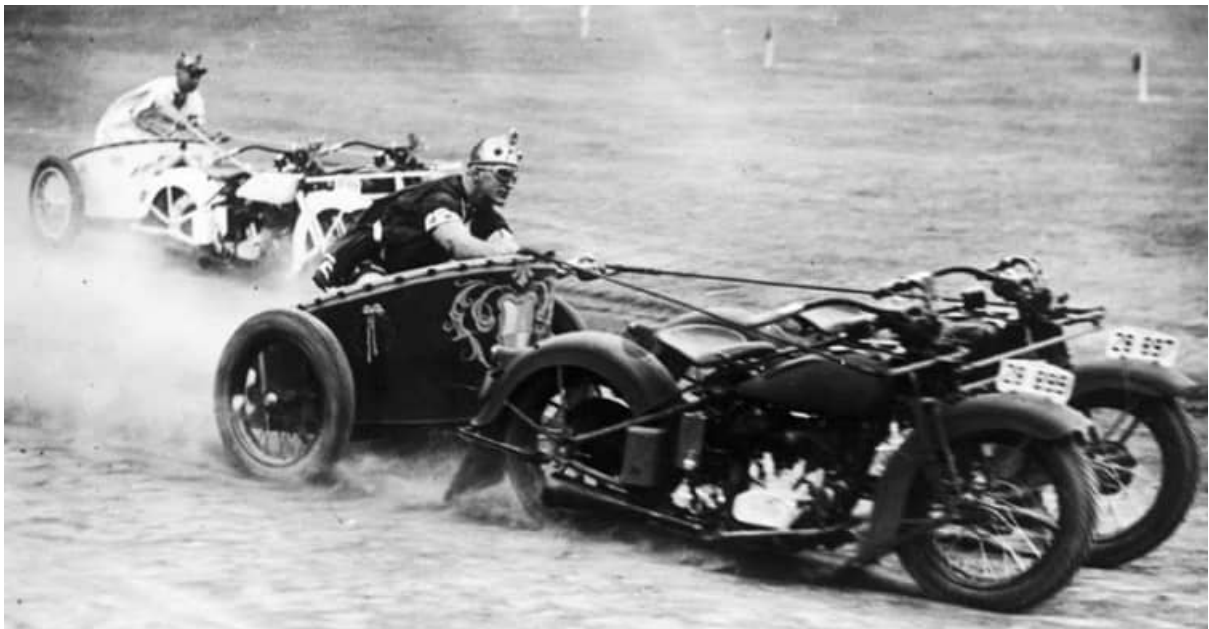


1924: Lambert with his BT before the start of the 3rd Tour de France. Organised by the Motorcycle Club de France since 1922, it covered nearly 4,000m over 16 consecutive days. The populations of towns and villages on the route turned out to cheer the competitors—the Tour was excellent for PR, showing that motor cycles offered reliable transport. Of 38 starters 31 finished the course and were on display for several days in Paris.





1924: Mlle Dupré, at the start of the 3rd Coupe de l'Armistice trial at the Joinville-Versailles circuit.



1925: Motorcycle chariot racing was a short-lived but dramatic spectacle inspired by the 1925 American silent epic *Ben-Hur*. The chariots were made from wine barrels with car wheels; the charioteers often wore Roman era-inspired costumes. As the sport evolved two and even three bikes were coupled to the chariots. Controlling them must

have been a challenge using just a pair of reins, seemingly made of leather. One method must have been to attach each rein to each individual motor cycle's throttle.

### **Memories of Yesteryear. Part 5: A flashback to the mid-1920s**

AS HISTORY TELLS US, THE PERIOD immediately following the First World War was extremely rich in the rebirth and subsequent development of both international motorcycling as a whole and the machines of the time in particular. Indeed, the pace and scale of development at that time would undoubtedly fill several books on the subject. The sheer abundance of data and documents covering this period threw up something of a dilemma in that I had to restrict my choices and share with you some of the best and most interesting stories and visual nuggets. So, continuing our journey through the memories of motorcycling and its evolution over the decades, here's a flashback via various photographic testimonies, mainly relating to the mid-1920s...

#### **The American Gypsy Tours**

The Federation of American Motorcyclists (FAM) listed 8,247 members in 1915, but with World War I draining potential recruits, the organisation ceased operations in 1919. The AMA (American Motorcyclist Association) was established in 1924 with the slogan 'An Organised Minority Can Always Defeat a Dis-organised Majority'. The AMA inherited the organisation of the Gypsy Tours, which became the biggest road-riding events of the year. Gypsy Tours were held on a single weekend throughout the country. They featured a ride to a scenic location for a picnic and various motorcycle competition events. There were often races, including hill climbs, races and dirt-track events, along with field meets, involving motorcycle games such as slow races, stake races and plank riding. In 1925 no less than 212 individual Gypsy Tours were held on 20 and 21 June. According to The Motorcycle & Bicycle Illustrated: "The Gypsy Tour idea originated eight or nine years ago, the object being to set a certain date for an outing, where riders, dealers and everyone interested in motorcycles would tour to some convenient spot for a day's sport and a real old-fashioned good time."





June 6, 1929: A group photo taken at the 9th annual Gypsy Tour in Amarillo, Texas.

#### 1925: First FIM Grand Prix in Assen, Berlin and Monza

On 21 April 1925, thirteen countries met in Paris for the FICM congress, (previously the FIM), formally recognised in the general sporting regulations as the only body representing motorcycling activities. Motorcycling events in 1925 were so numerous that date clashes were impossible to avoid. These events included the first German GP on the former racing circuit Avus, through the Grunewald forest, on the outskirts of Berlin. That unique road served as a high-speed toll route between the city and the suburbs during the week, and as a venue for both car and motorbike races at weekends. The first 'Dutch TT' was held on 11 July, organised by Motorclub Assen en Omstreken. The 28.4km triangular course on brick-paved public roads went through the villages of Rolde, Borger and Schoonloo. In 1926 the Dutch TT moved to a new 16.5km track at Assen (that year a company was founded in Italy to produce electric capacitors: Ducati). The first FICM European Grand Prix was held in Monza in 1925. It was decided that the title of European Champion in various classes would be awarded to the winner of this race. The organisation was not yet in place to operate a championship run over a series of races.



1925: Nedham on his Dot at the Montlhéry Grand Prix.





1925: Liaudois (Train 125cc) at the 'Journée des Records' in Arpajon.



1925: Start of a race at the AVUS circuit on the outskirts of Berlin.



1925: Rolland and his Terrot at the Montlhéry Grand Prix.





1926: Start of the second Dutch TT.



1925: Hatton with his Douglas at the Montlhéry Grand Prix.





Anderson rode with the Indian tribe at the Montlhéry Grand Prix.

#### In the Land of the Rising Sun

The first motorcycle race in Japan was held in 1913, at the Hanshin Racecourse, a dirt horse racing track in Nishinomiya, (near Kobe). Around 30,000 spectators attended, a record for any kind of race in Japan. Racing became more common at venues across the country and professional riders emerged including the remarkable Kenzo Tada, the first Japanese rider to compete at the Isle of Man TT, in 1930, on a Velocette KTT. A massive earthquake destroyed much of Tokyo in 1923, killing hundreds of thousands of people. The absence of motorised emergency vehicles added to the impassable road network heralded great change for the Japanese vehicle industry, and the road network itself. Tokyo was rebuilt with a revised road layout which led the number of vehicles to double in 1924 and a clamour for a more modern nationwide road system. To further promote the nascent Japanese vehicle industry, in 1925 import tariffs were imposed on foreign vehicles, leading Ford (1924), General Motors (1927) and Chrysler in (1929) to establish factories in Japan. Harley-Davidson followed suit in 1929. Several small motorcycle manufacturers also set up shop in the mid-1920s, including the 350cc two-stroke Sanda, (Thunder), from Osaka, the SSD of Hiroshima, and the grand-daddy of them all, a 1,200cc twin called the Giant, built by Count Katsu Kiyoshi in 1924. The Japan Automobile Company (JAC), started producing motorcycles in 1929, including 350cc and 500cc sidevalve singles and a 500cc V-twin on JAP lines.



1930: Kenzo Tada was the first Japanese rider to ride in the TT—he finished 15th in the Junior aboard his KTT Velo.





March 1926: Winners of the Shizuoka Championship—Nose (BSA), Matsumoto (H-D single), and Kawabata (New Imperial).



1926: A Japanese advert for the Belgian Saroléa.

1926: Disqualified for a spark plug at the TT

In 1926 the second FICM European Grand Prix took place, this time in Belgium on the Spa-Francorchamps circuit, with classes for 175, 250, 350 and 500cc. Italian rider Pietro Gherzi was the first foreigner to try his hand at the 1926 TT, riding a Moto Guzzi. He finished second, but was disqualified for using a different spark plug to the one specified on his entry form. On May 22 and 23 the 5th Bol d'Or took place on the 5.8 km Circuit des Loges in Saint-Germain-en-Laye. The Bol d'Or, launched in 1922 by Eugene Mauve, was originally open to both motorcycles and automobiles.





1926: A racing sidecar of the time in a German competition.



1926: Start of the motorcycles race at the Bol d'Or.





1926: Renaud on a CP at the Bol d'Or.



28 July, 1925: The Gillet-Herstal team about to leave Porte Maillot in Paris for the Paris-Moscow raid.

1926: Robert Sexé and Henry Andrieux go global Motorcyclist, reporter, globetrotter and tireless traveller, Robert Sexé (1890-1986) brought back many photos and stories of his adventures which delighted readers of motorcycle and travel magazines. In 1924 Robert Sexé and two teammates, Messrs Krebs and Dumoulin, completed the Paris-Constantinople-Paris 'raid' on Gillet-Herstal motorcycles provided by the Belgian manufacturer. In 1925 the same team tackled the Paris-Moscow 'raid', also on Gillet-Herstals. On 14 June 1926 Robert Sexé, this time accompanied by Henry Andrieux, hit the road in front of the public and the Paris press corps for the first round of a world motorcycle tour, again with support from Gillet-Herstal. Their jaunt was covered by newspapers all around the world. In 5½ months they covered 35,000km, including 22,000km on their bikes. They faced extreme cold, hunger and fatigue, pushing their 220kg machines over seldom used, desolate muddy tracks, especially deep in the USSR. They were the last witnesses of tribes and countries which have now disappeared. They crossed Belgium, Germany, Poland and the USSR, swiftly followed by entry to Japan where they had the chance to meet Mr Suzuki, who went on to make the motorcycles that bear his name. They then went through the United States, meeting Erwin 'Cannonball' Baker, the motorcycling pioneer set dozens of cross-country records on a variety of motorcycles and sidecars. They also rode on Route 66, then under construction in segments and often discontinuous ones at that—it would not be entirely paved until 1938. They eventually reached New York with its skyscrapers still under



construction. Sexé and Andrieux finally returned to the Belgium Federation of Motorcycling's headquarters in Brussels on 3 December 1926.



1926: The day before the start of his round-the-world motorcycle tour, Robert Sexé poses at Porte Maillot on his Gillet for the press and posterity.

#### 1926: Paris-Nice

Since its debut in 1913 this prestigious 1,200km Paris-Nice regularity run had attracted most of the major motorcycle brands of the time. The event was then organised in four stages, ending with the 'Critérium de Nice', comprising a cold-start competition, a kilometre run test and climbing the Côte de la Turbie. Competitors had to present themselves at the checkpoints, maintaining a specified average speed for each class. Motorcycle clubs along the way that helped with the organisation included MC de France, UM Aube, MVC Dijonnais, MC Mâconnais, MC Lyon, MC Roanne, UM Forez, MC Dauphinois, MC Avignon, MC Marseille, MC Draguignan and, of course, MC Nice. Paris-Nice became a phenomenal sporting success. At the end of February and beginning of March 1924 the competition was run in six stages with classes for scooters and mopeds (75 and 100cc), motorcycles (175, 250, 350, 500, 750 and 1,000cc), outfits (350, 600 and 1,000cc) and two-seat cyclecars (350, 500, 750 and 1,100cc). The 1924 route was particularly tough—for the first time it included the route des Alpes between Lyon and Sisteron, which was freshly opened to traffic in winter. Of 70 competitors who left Paris, only 50 completed the course. In 1926 only 81 of the 91 entrants were allowed to start;

10 failed to pass scrutineering. Marques represented included Peugeot, Monet-Goyon, Terrot, Gnome et Rhône, La Française, MagnatDebon, Motosacoche, Dollar, Prester, Le Grimpeur, Cl Delage, Favor, Janin, PS, Stella, Jean Thomann, Royal Moto, Propulcycle, Dé-Dé, Arbinet, BSA, Triumph, Scott, Harlette, Harley-Davidson, Condor, Gillet, Sphinx, Saroléa, SIMA-Violet, D'Yrsan, Sénéchal and Morgan. Here's how a contemporary magazine reacted to the 1926 Paris-Nice trial: "Formerly, the motorcycle knew a rare period of prosperity: every cyclist dreamed of suppressing fatigue by adding an engine to his steel frame, and we saw thousands of 'petroleum bikes', uncomfortable and not very reliable, from which however the owners derived satisfaction. Then the power of these machines increased without the commensurate addition of comfort and proper function following. The motorcycle, if it did not die from these faults, suffered terribly. She was despised among us as much as she had unleashed enthusiasm amongst her followers. Since then, manufacturers, especially those across the Channel, have changed their minds. Instead of making motorcycles that are too fast and too powerful, they have provided us with machines that run safely and comfortably, delicious sidecars for a trip for two which are like light and pleasant small 'cars' to ride. Again, the public's favour returned to the motorcycle, and interesting motorcycle events could be organised for these machines."



This 1921 Paris-Nice gold medal diploma was awarded to a competitor named Pierre Duverne who rode a Rudge Multi in the 500cc class.





Luckily for motorcycle memorabilia enthusiasts, this Paris-Nice 1924 medal has survived for almost 100 years.



1926 Paris-Nice trial: The Harlette team about to weigh-in their machines.





1926 Paris-Nice trial: Sauvet on his Gnome Rhône.



1926 Paris-Nice trial: The BSA team, Messrs Lunes, Berrenger, and Vache.



1926 Paris-Nice trial:: Boulanger rode a Stella.





1926 Paris-Nice trial: Messrs Benoist and Gaston rode 175cc Thomann two-strokes.



1926 Paris-Nice trial: The Peugeot team were mounted on unit-construction 175cc two-strokes.





1926 Paris-Nice trial: Guibert and his 750cc BSA outfit.

#### 1926: Riding a motorcycle off a cliff

It takes a certain kind of person to strap a parachute to their back, climb aboard a motorcycle and ride at full pelt off a cliff. To do so almost 100 years ago was next level crazy. British Pathé filmed Fred Osborne attempting the first ever motorcycle parachute jump from the 500ft Huntington Cliff in Los Angeles, aboard a four-pot Henderson. Without a helmet and wearing nothing but a jersey (with the slogan 'Just Freddie' scrawled across the back) jeans and high leather boots, the daredevil offers a nonchalant glance to the camera before accelerating to around 60mph and hitting the tiny take-off ramp. Unfortunately, someone had got their calculations wrong and his speed and the height of the cliff weren't enough to allow for a full parachute deployment. Osborne and the Henderson plummeted to the ground below, where the bike burst into flames. Incredibly, the young man survived; telephone wires broke his fall, he was rushed to hospital and made a full recovery.



1926: Fred Osborne flew into the history books as the first motorcycling parachutist and lived to tell the tale.

## *Parachute Fails To Open, but Man May Live, Anyway*

Santa Monica, Cal., Nov. 18.—(AP) —Although a parachute failed to open when Fred Osborne, stunt man and aviator, drove a motorcycle over a 500-foot cliff near here yesterday, he probably will recover from his injuries, physicians said today.

Telephone and telegraph wires broke the fall of the man and motorcycle.

Osborne recently rescued a woman stunt flyer by dropping from his plane to the ship from which she had attempted to jump. He released her after her parachute became entangled in the landing gear.

*The film's well worth a look, you'll find it*

at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MyYn5nkNHBV> Enjoy—Ed

### **Memories of Yesteryear. Part 6: All You Need Is Love (and a bike)**

IN MY LAST CHAPTER I ENDEAVOURED to give you a brief insight into the motorcycling world in the mid-1920s. The next chapter will continue this fascinating historical thread, starting at the beginning of the 1930s which proved to be an extremely rich period in motorcycle evolution. However, as I'm writing this just before Valentine's Day, you'll perhaps forgive me if I take a moment to celebrate the occasion as I attempt to bring together the two, (at times), contradictory topics of love and motorcycles. Not the



easiest of topics to combine perhaps, but remember, lovers and couples associated with motorcycle are one of the many themes to be found illustrated in the history of the postcard, humorous, sentimental or otherwise, in drawings, photographs and cartoons. So please join me as we wander through time together, leafing through some of my postcard archive and turning up stories in the evolution of the postcard over the centuries.

Pre-dating the arrival of the 'little printed card' that was posted at one time or another, the sending of open messages actually dates back to ancient times. During the fourth millennium in Assyria, clay tablets were inscribed with messages; more recently, in the reign of Louis XIII, visiting notes were written on playing cards, traces of which can still be found in the archives of the post offices in Paris dating back to 1777.

In France, during the second half of the 19th century, glossy commercial cards were in circulation containing advertisements. These were among the first examples of marketing messages and took the form of small cards, although they had no personal aspect to them and were designed purely to sell products or advertise services.

The term 'correspondence card' was first used in 1869 by an Austrian called Emmanuel Hermann; to simplify the postal system he managed to convince the Austrian postal administration to use the generic term 'correspondenz-karte'. Thus the postcard was born: a rectangle of stiff paper, printed on the front with text and space reserved for a stamp; the reverse left blank for correspondence. This shameless correspondence, open for all the world to see, was derided in France and the UK for its lack of discretion, but it sold more than 45,000 copies on its first day of publication.

In 1870 the postcard arrived in Strasbourg, which was being besieged by the German army at the start of the Franco-Prussian War. A card bearing the Red Cross stamp was circulated by the Wounded Relief Society in an attempt to allow the civilian population to communicate directly with the outside world. It is interesting to note dates on which postcards were mailed for the first time: 1870, Switzerland, Great Britain; 1871, Belgium; 1872, Russia, France; 1873, United States (stamped by the government), Romania, Japan; 1874, Germany. In 1871, Canada was the first country outside Europe to permit the use of postcards as a legitimate form of postal correspondence; only the Postal Service was licensed to issue them and the only illustration was the face of Queen Victoria. From 1873 to 1971 the postcard benefited from a lower rate than ordinary mail and the use of postcards rose in line with general literacy. French postcards remained a monopoly of the French 'Administration des Postes' until 1875. In that year international mailing of postcards began following the first meeting of the General Postal Union in Bern. In 1889 the first illustrated postcard appeared in France; it was called 'La Libonis' after its designer, Léon Charles Libonis. The Société de la Tour Eiffel published 300,000 copies during the Universal Exhibition and five different designs were sold from August 1889 (these souvenir cards of the ascent of the Eiffel Tower could be stamped at the first platform, the second or the top of the Tower). The 1900 Universal Exhibition marked an explosion in the use of postcards—production

rose from 100 million in 1910 to 800 million in 1914.

The UK was slower than its continental neighbours to latch onto the possibilities of picture postcards; it was not until 1894 that the Post Office agreed to their private publication. Even after 1894, picture postcards did not immediately become a success in the UK. Early examples tended to show seaside and city views rather than subjects or themes. By 1902 however, postcards were published featuring everything from the Boer War to royal events, and in that year the Post Office allowed both address and message to be written on one side of the card, freeing up the other side for the picture. Britain thus became the first country to introduce the 'divided' postcard format we are familiar with today.

The decade from 1910 shows the almost journalistic role played by the postcard with the depiction of train or bus accidents, demonstrations, strikes, visits by the Head of State, official funerals, planes and balloons. All were shown, and often they pictured street scenes, panoramas and public monuments with specific traders advertising their wares posed in front of them. People were traveling more than you might expect and all of Europe was open to them. The postcard was evolving, a boom was being created linked to increased tourism. French author Georges Duhamel wrote: "The invention of the postcard did more for tourism than that of the railways." I'm not sure that's true, but certainly the desire to show one's friends just where you'd been and how well travelled you were had something to do with it. All manner of greetings were sent by postcard, humorous, fantasy-themed, caricature, politically orientated and, of course, saucy. The saucier aspects of the more racy cards sometimes got publishers into trouble.

The First World War gave new impetus to the exchange of postcards as millions of men were stationed far from their families and loved ones. The illustrations were often thinly disguised state propaganda, but the correspondence itself was of course the real message. Cards posted from garrisons and convalescent homes were not subject to the same rigorous censorship as at the front so gave a lot of more detail of daily life and the morale of the troops. At the time, no publisher knew when the war would end, so we saw an evolution of captions: Campaign of 1914, War of 1914, International War, War of 1914-1915, Great War 1914-1917, Great War 1914-1918.

As if to start afresh after these terrible war years, people seemed to turn away from postcards in the 1920s. The coming together of families, growing competition from the telephone and telegraph, the use of photography in the press and the development of the motor vehicles all contributed to making the postcard an obsolescence. The economic crisis of the 1930s and the Second World War only further served to hasten the decline of the postcard throughout Europe. In the 1970s, old postcards were rediscovered and appreciated because they bear witness to a bygone era. Old trades, sites, buildings, postcards fascinate became popular among collectors and those seeking a nostalgic vision of times gone by.

Perhaps the postcard in all its outdated forms is itself a dinosaur, but at least we can touch it and gaze upon it directly without the aid of any electronic device, and in these



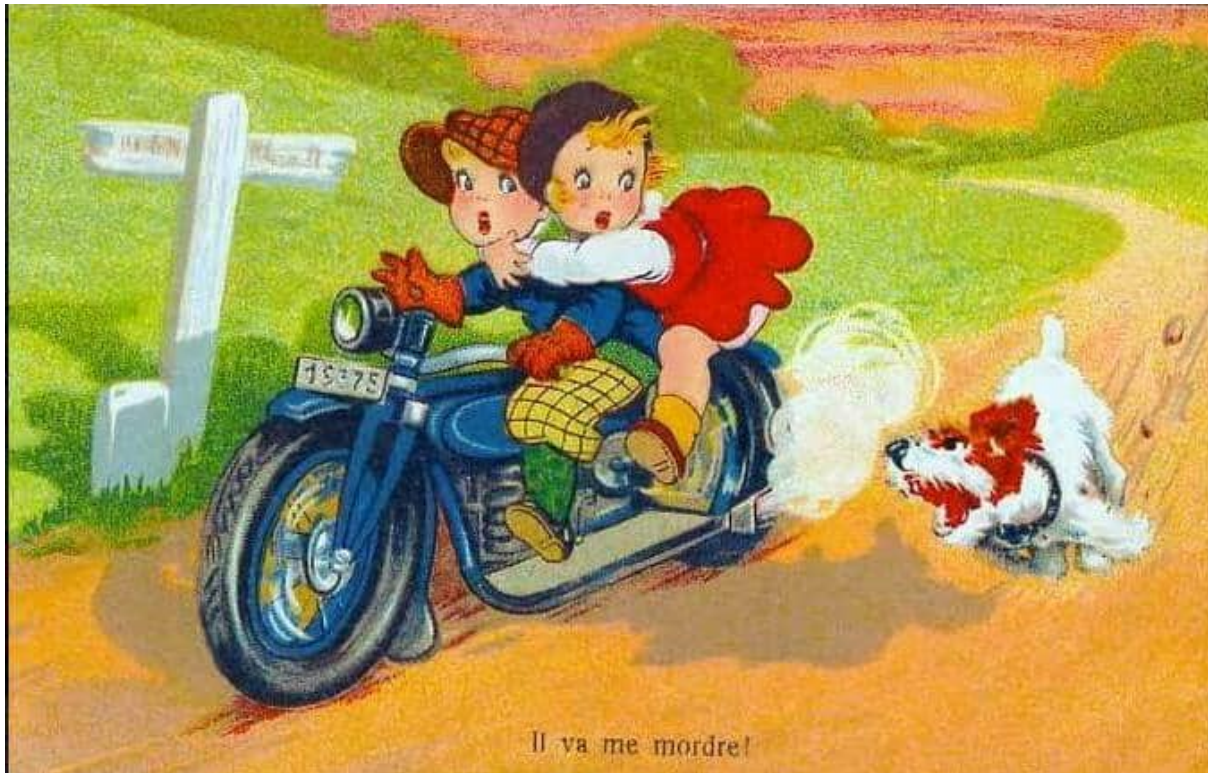
difficult times, isn't that what we all want...the direct touch and gaze of another and the tactility that only comes with being human?



This old Italian postcard depicts two young lovers riding a motorcycle of the imaginary brand Moto-Love, perhaps on their way to seventh heaven!



A postcard of French origin, probably printed at the beginning of the 1930s.



Journeys on two wheels in the countryside were not without danger and surprises. These early illustrations often show an animal unexpectedly crossing the path of the motorcycle, a dog chasing it, a puncture, a mechanical breakdown, or even perhaps a fall!





When you finally arrive at your destination without a hitch, what could be more romantic than a picnic in the great outdoors with your lover?



This French postcard, written in English and French dates from the Great War. The French soldier seems more interested in embracing his partner than repairing his motorcycle after hitting a tree. After all, everything seems ok. The bird is still in its nest.

The tree is still firmly in place. It's just the machine that seems to need a little attention...



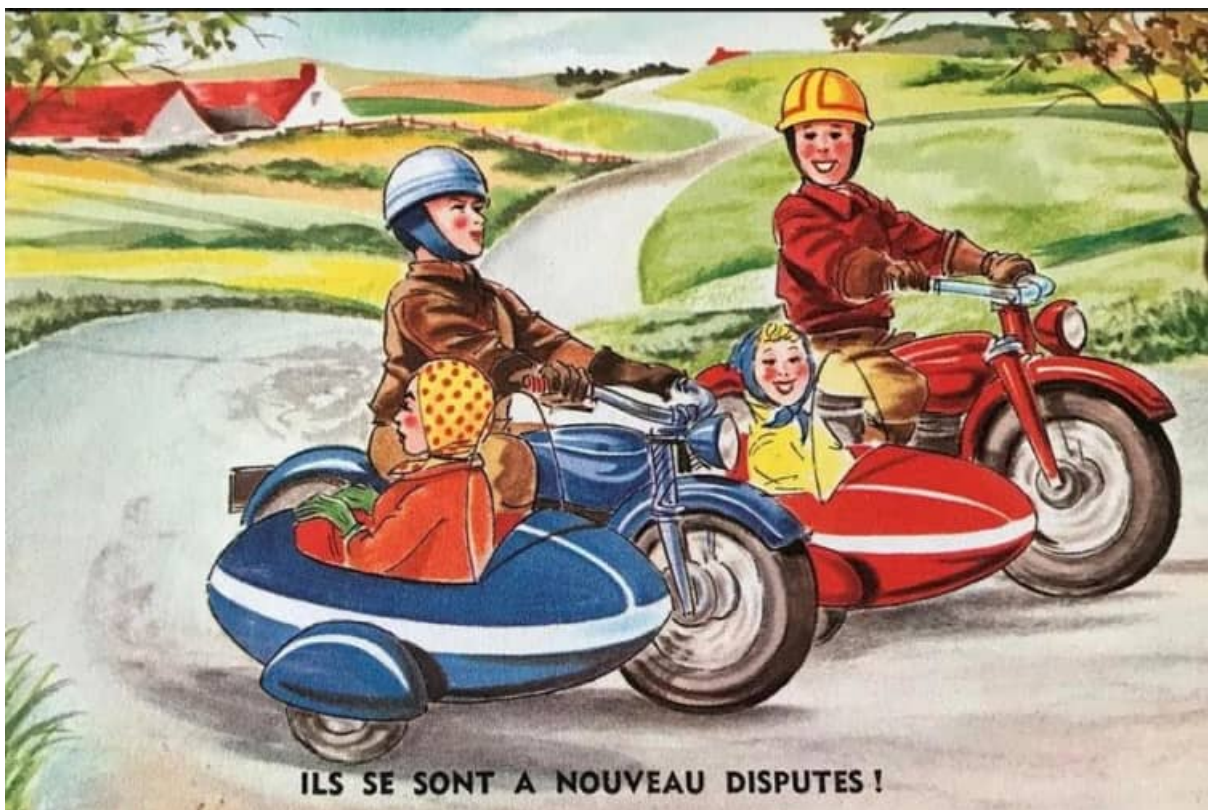
Since it is impossible to translate a pun with finesse from one language to another, let's let these two old French humorous cards speak for themselves. I'm sure you can provide your own captions...





VIRAGE BIEN PRIS... GARE AU SUIVANT !

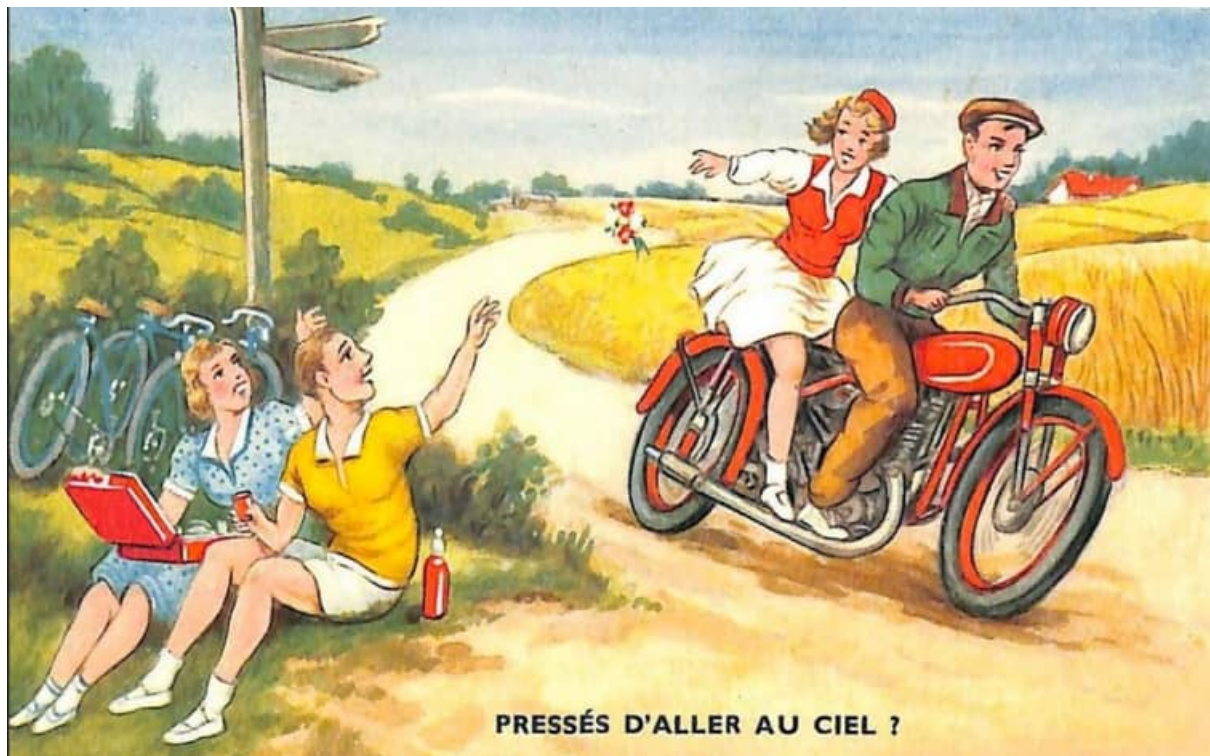
The chicken on the right of this Belgium postcard seems to have barely escaped the passage of this couple. Note the sign on the left showing a poster presumably for a cigarette brand at a time when smoking was fashionable.



ILS SE SONT A NOUVEAU DISPUTES !

The caption of this French postcard let us know that this couple has just had an argument.





The caption asks this couple of motorcyclists if they are in a hurry to see their maker!



English postcards also represented the dangers of motorcycling.



## D—N THESE COMBINATIONS!



British ladies' outfits from days gone by were apparently not made for motorbikes.

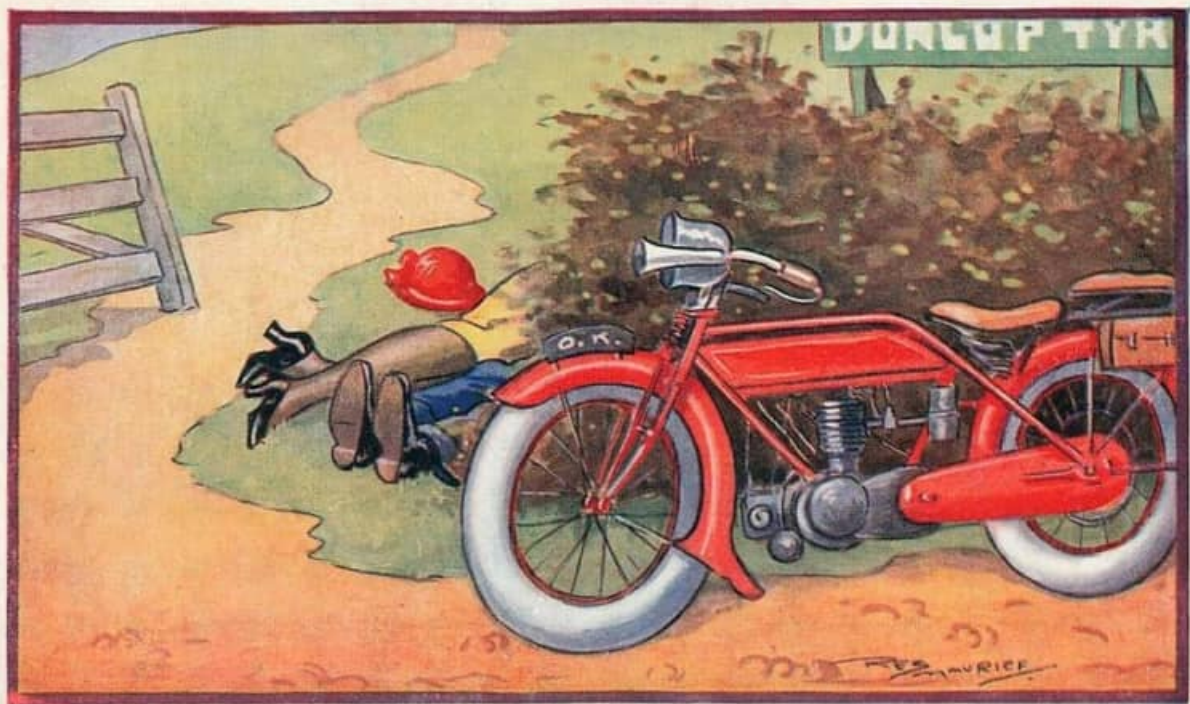
**"There's something gone wrong with the engine!"**  
**"Don't be silly, George - wait till we get off the main road!"**



This old English postcard proves that to claim to break down must not only be an international trick but invented from the very start of motorised transport.



## THE JOYS OF THE OPEN ROAD.



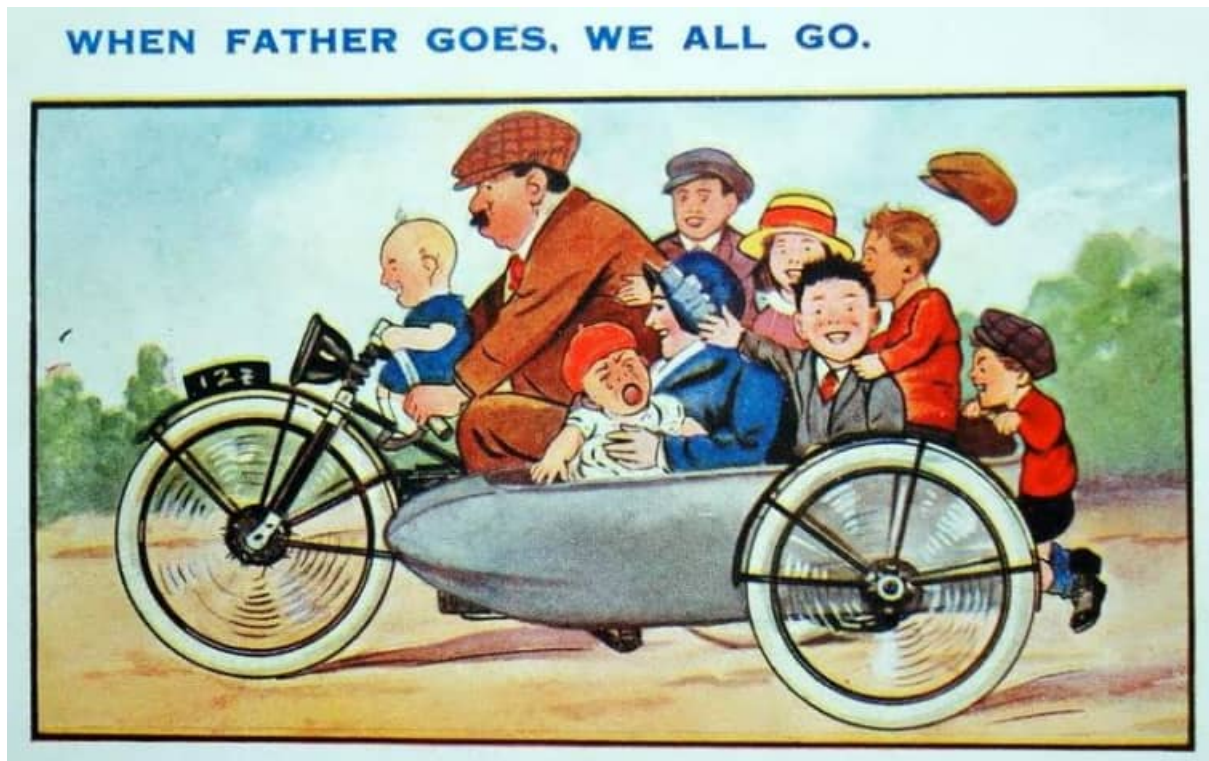
Apparently, the trick of claiming to break down worked well. No need to wait for Valentine's Day for your sweetheart to offer you a special treat...

## NOW THEN! NO PARKING HERE

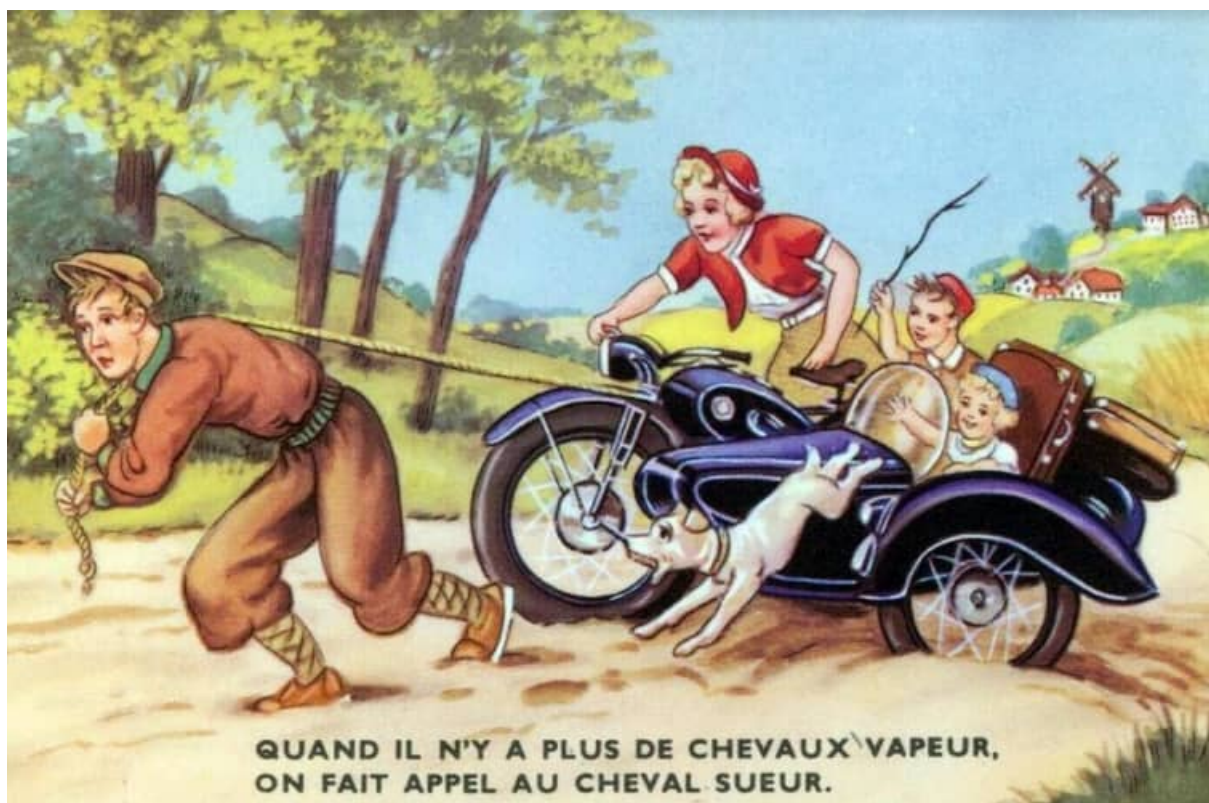


A postcard that confirms that whatever country you live in, even when you don't do anything wrong, the police are often around to intervene.





After the flirtation, the first dates, the first kisses, the love affairs, came the engagement followed by marriage. Then came the foundation of the family like that of the prolifically fertile couple seen above.



The legend of this French postcard displays another subtle pun, playing on nuances of mechanical terms, which I find difficult to translate into English. Horse power in all its various forms is the basis of the pun.





'Long live freedom and camping' recommends this French postcard.



A greetings postcard printed in Holland.



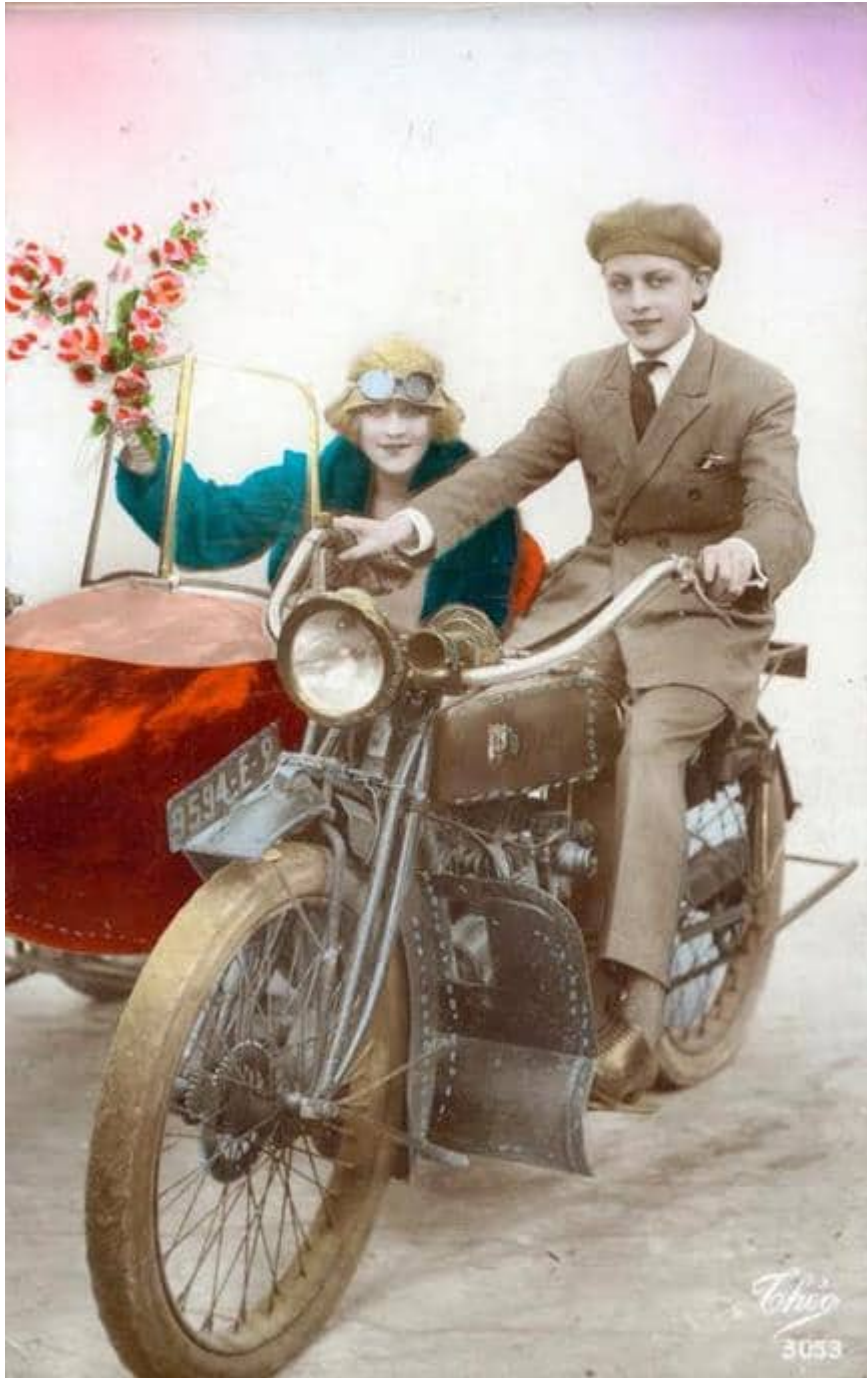


Heliogravure, a faster and less expensive process discovered in 1875 but applied to postcards only after 1918, became widespread from 1923. Printers then used trendy hues: sepia, blue, green or purple.



'Let's not stay old bachelors. Let's work for re-population' says the postcard on the right displaying the portraits of potential female conquests. Between 1914 and 1918, 2,000,000 French soldiers died in the fighting (without counting the colonials, the missing and without the figures for the Spanish flu). After the state sent its citizens to war, it now asked them to make love to re-populate the country.





The hand tinting on this card extended only to the young beauty in her sidecar.

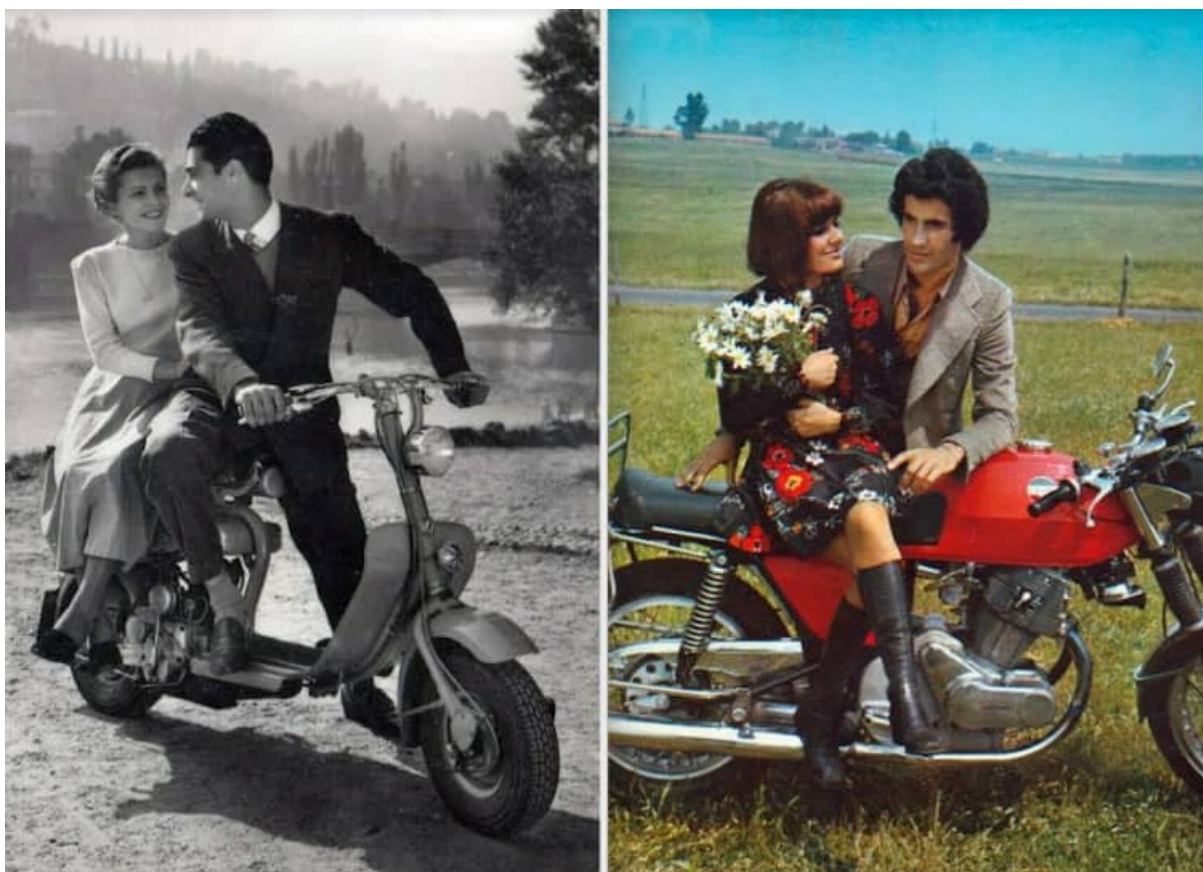


A German postcard testifies to what the motorcycle industry of this country knew how to produce at that time.



Another postcard from West Germany.





Lambretta and Laverda, Romeo and Juliet, love is in the air in the Italian countryside.



On the occasion of Valentine's Day, we'll end this article with couples and motorcycles and of course a lover's kiss.

## **Memories of Yesteryear. Part 7: A tribute to women on two wheels**

AFTER A DIGRESSION I MADE RECENTLY on the occasion of Valentine's Day, I had planned to come back to talk to you about the post-1925 period, picking up where I left off at the end of Part 5. Well, that's a bust! I woke up on 8 March 2021 and the media announced it was International Women's Day. If I hadn't heard about it from the TV, I must admit that I would have completely passed me by. But in an effort to seek forgiveness for this omission from the fairer sex surfing this website, I will endeavour to celebrate International Women's Day in my own way using a subject that I have had in mind for ages: women and motorcycles. I wanted my choice to include not only the most famous female motorcycling heroines, but also photos of total strangers, the illustrious and previously anonymous riders of yesterday. In this chapter we'll discover dusty old images of these unknown ladies of yesteryear.





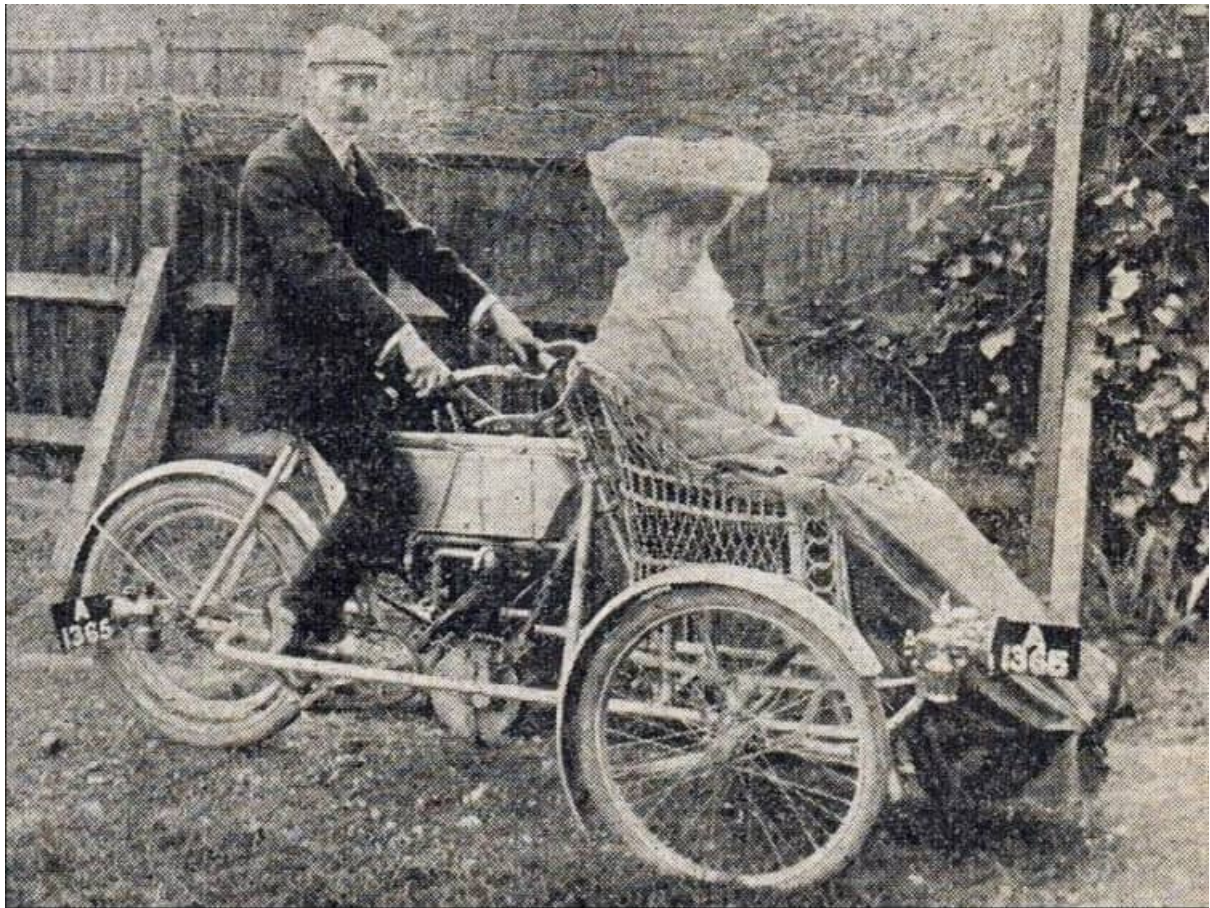
1905: An

'Amazon' riding her metal steed.



Latelle, an American stunt rider circa 1920.





The beautiful passenger on that 1904 Westfield Tricar sports a fancy hat and all the essential clothing of the time, including a veil that protected her from possible insect impacts while driving.

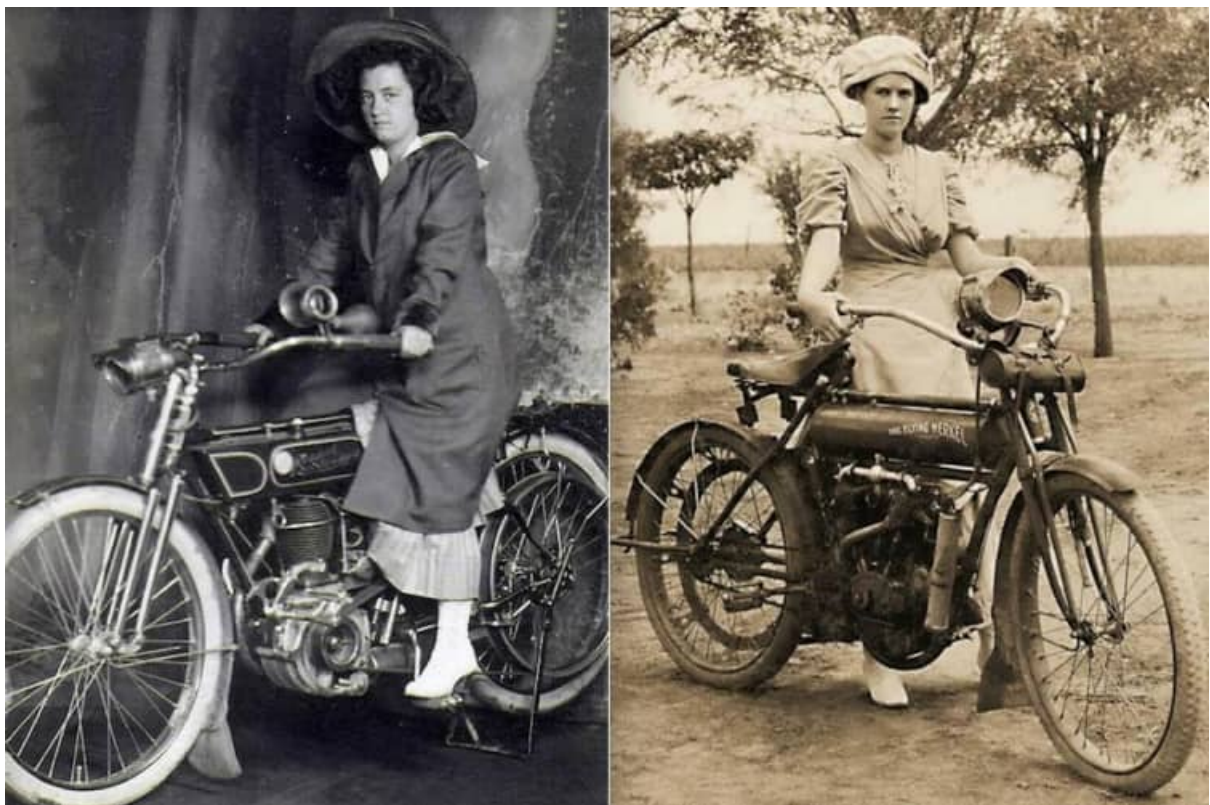


Beauty and the beast perhaps? The machine is a 1900 Levassor & De Boise.





In this 1905 photo the motorcycle is not stationary on the stand, but in motion. Madame's long dress forces her to ride side saddle.



More superb hats! What do we know about this lady on the left? Not much, except that

this unknown brunette photographed here in 1911 in Seattle, on a Reading Standard, is American. As for her colleague on the right, also American and photographed in 1910, she poses with a Flying Merkel.

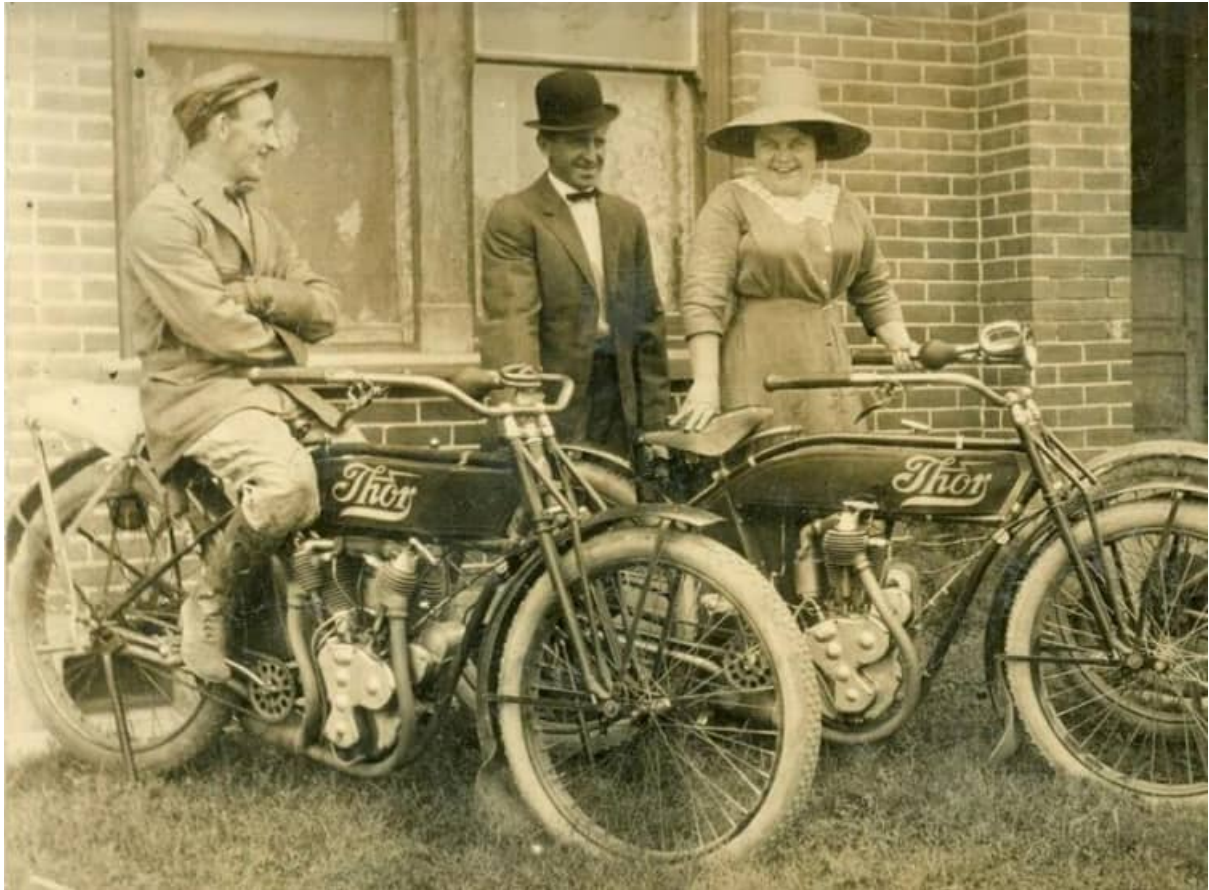


Madame is out in the countryside with Monsieur. A beautiful day in 1911. It's time for a motorcycle ride. She lets herself be transported by Monsieur who has to do all the work.



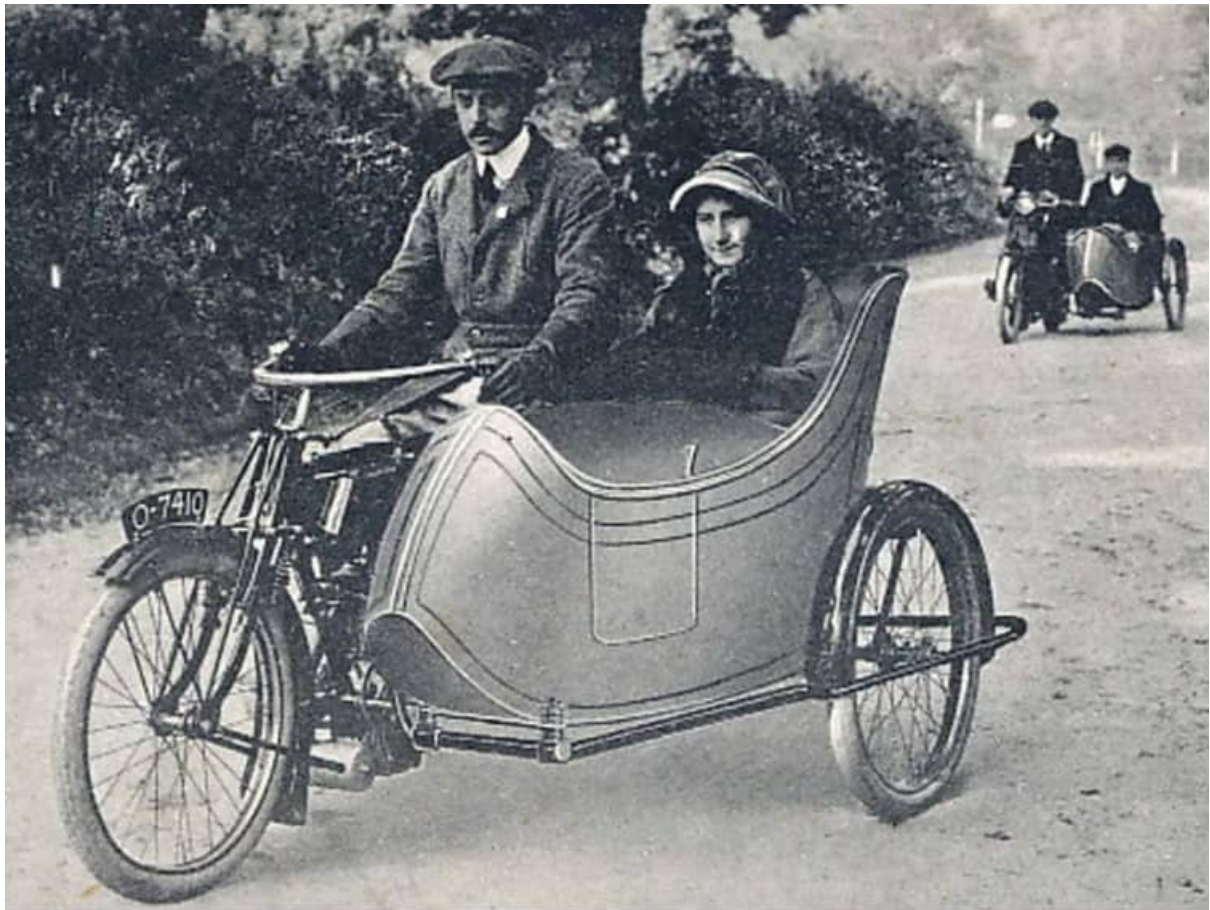


Another country excursion, this time Down Under. Two couples ride around on their respective combos with their wicker sidecars. One of the two husbands immortalises the moment in a photo. As you can see, at the very beginning of the last century, the big smile you want nowadays when you have your photo taken was not yet de rigueur...



... except for this very jovial and plump American lady posing in good company, in 1913, in front of two splendid Thor models. Thor produced motorcycle engines for Indian motorcycles and went on to produce its own line of machines in the early 1900s. Sales began to decline in the early 1910s (one of the factors may have been the rise of the Ford Model T). Thor stopped making motorcycle engines in 1916.





In a leafy lane of Shakespeare's country, Madame and probably her husband are riding around in their beautiful combo made by the British manufacturer New Hudson. Founded in 1903 by George Patterson in Birmingham, the first New Hudson motorcycle was produced in 1902 but was unsuccessful. The firm stopped motorcycle production in 1932.

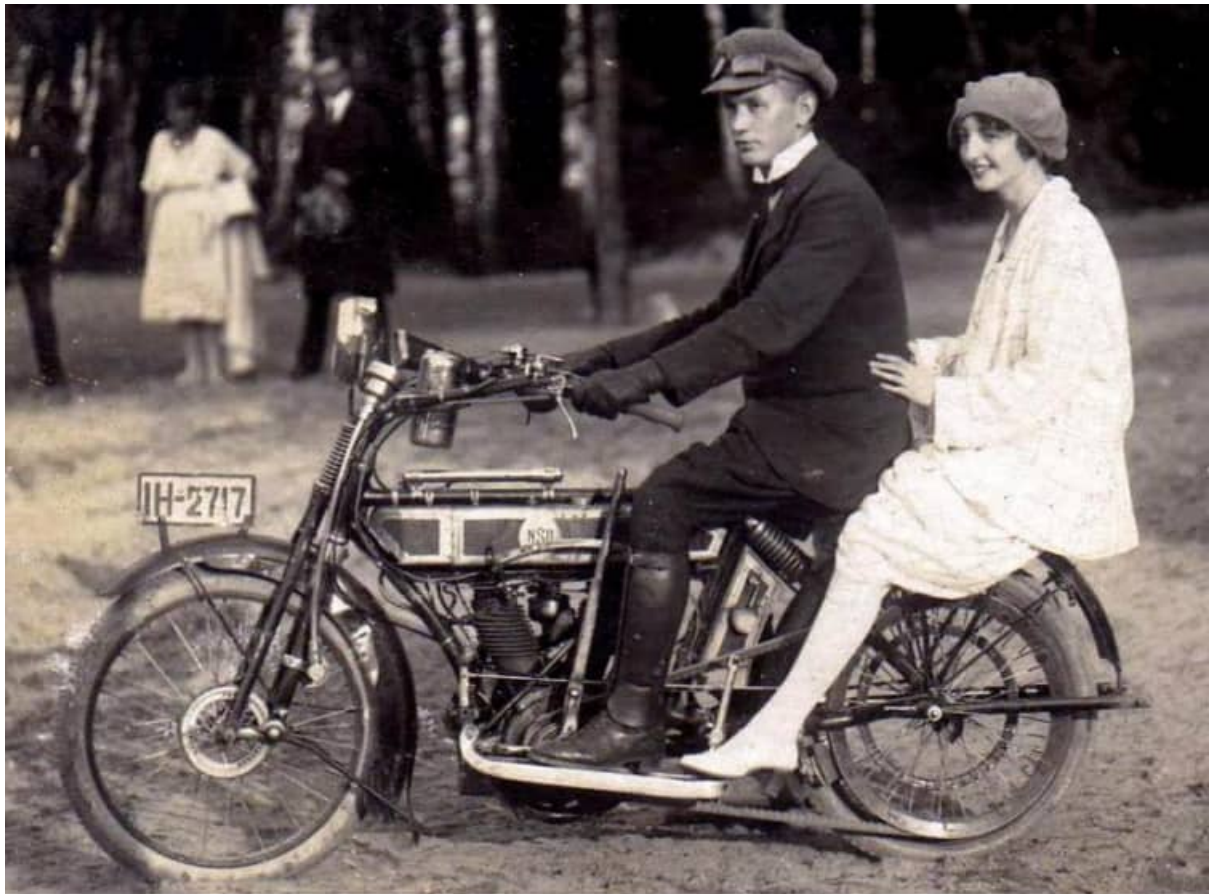


Madame is very chic in her summer outfit. White shirt and tie might not be the most appropriate outfit for the dusty roads of the era, but she wears the motorcycle goggles on her hat nonetheless. I like to imagine that this lady is a wealthy American landowner visiting the expanse of her domain riding her superb steel steed made in Milwaukee.



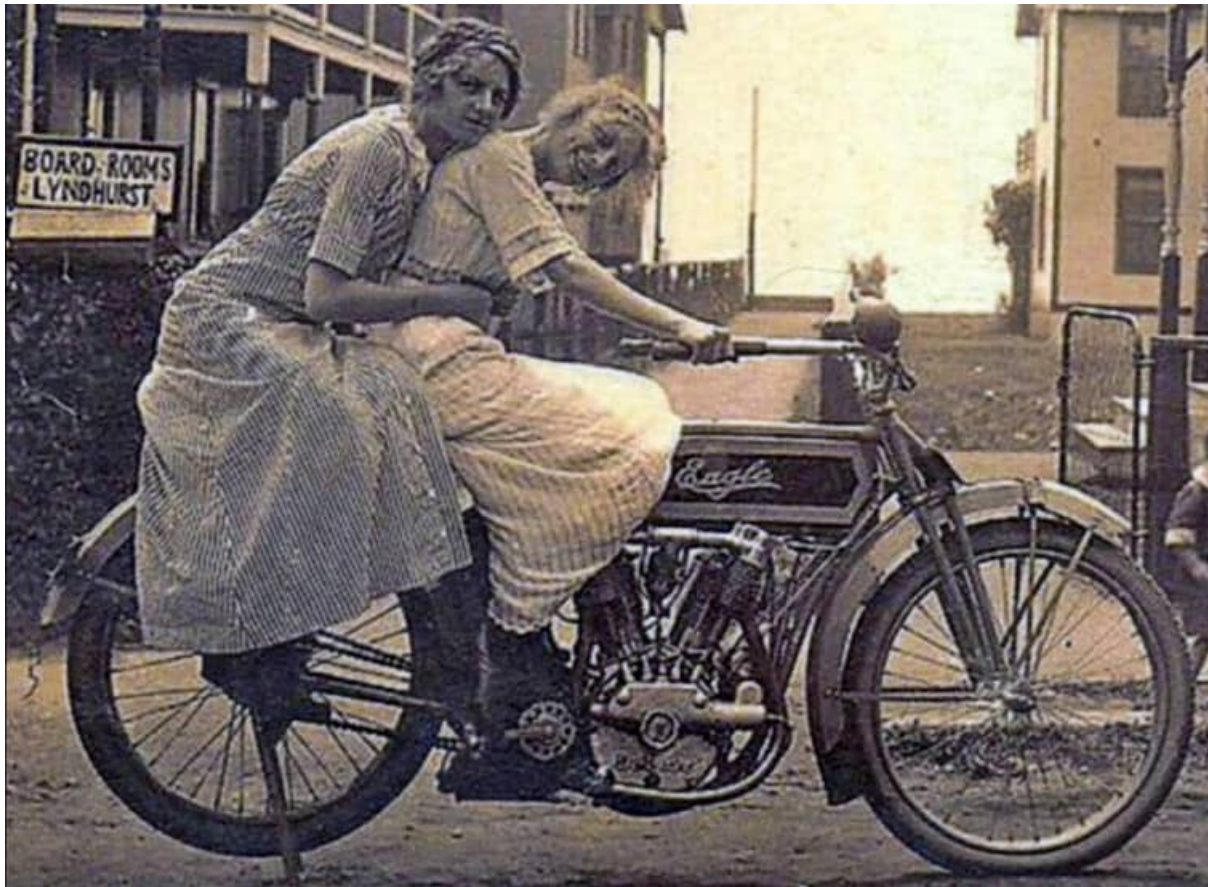


This pensive lady doesn't seem to be having an unforgettable day. The photography does not reflect any joy or gaiety. But as everyone knows, life isn't always fun. Fortunately, the Indian motorcycle saves the scene by illuminating the photo in all its splendour.



Now let's go for a ride in Germany, where a smiling lady pillion of NSU motorcycle seems on the contrary to spend a pleasant moment in the company of her partner, riding on a path that one imagines meandering into the German countryside.





Are these two New Jersey beauties riding an Eagle going to fly away?



Two beauties, one human the other mechanical, photographed circa 1910 in Pennsylvania.

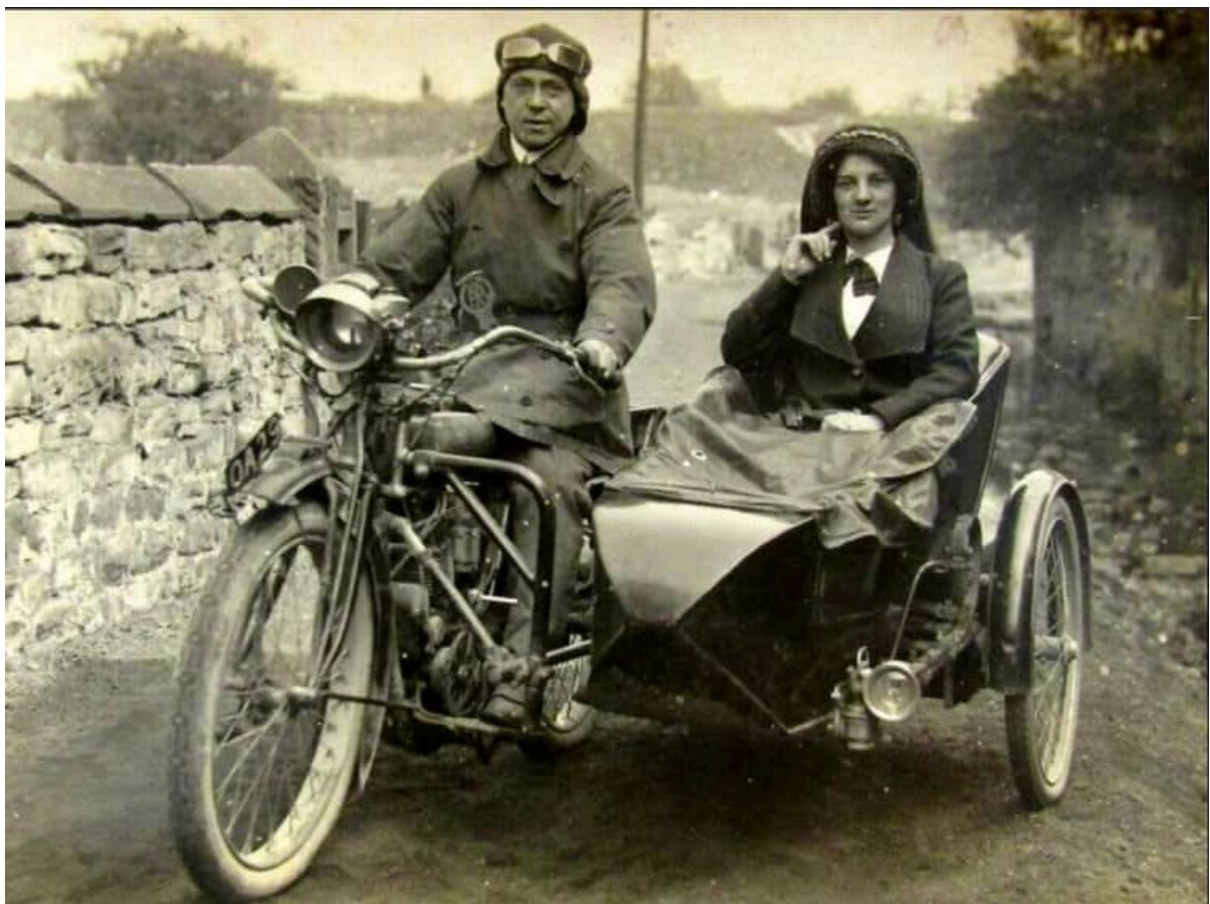


Her facial expression reflects pride and confidence. If the machine belongs to her, we imagine that this lady who also seems to belong to high society has above-average financial means to be able to afford to buy a machine so expensive at the time. Unfortunately, I don't know the brand or the model.





Tea time in the forest. Madame takes care of the outdoor service.



A lady passenger in a sidecar combination which I suppose to be British judging by the Automobile Association badge on the handlebars. This society, dating from 1905, was originally founded to help motorists avoid police speed traps, in response to the Motor Car Act 1903 which introduced new penalties for breaking the speed limit, including the possibility of jail for speeding and other driving offences.



Lady on a Rudge Multi in the 1920s.

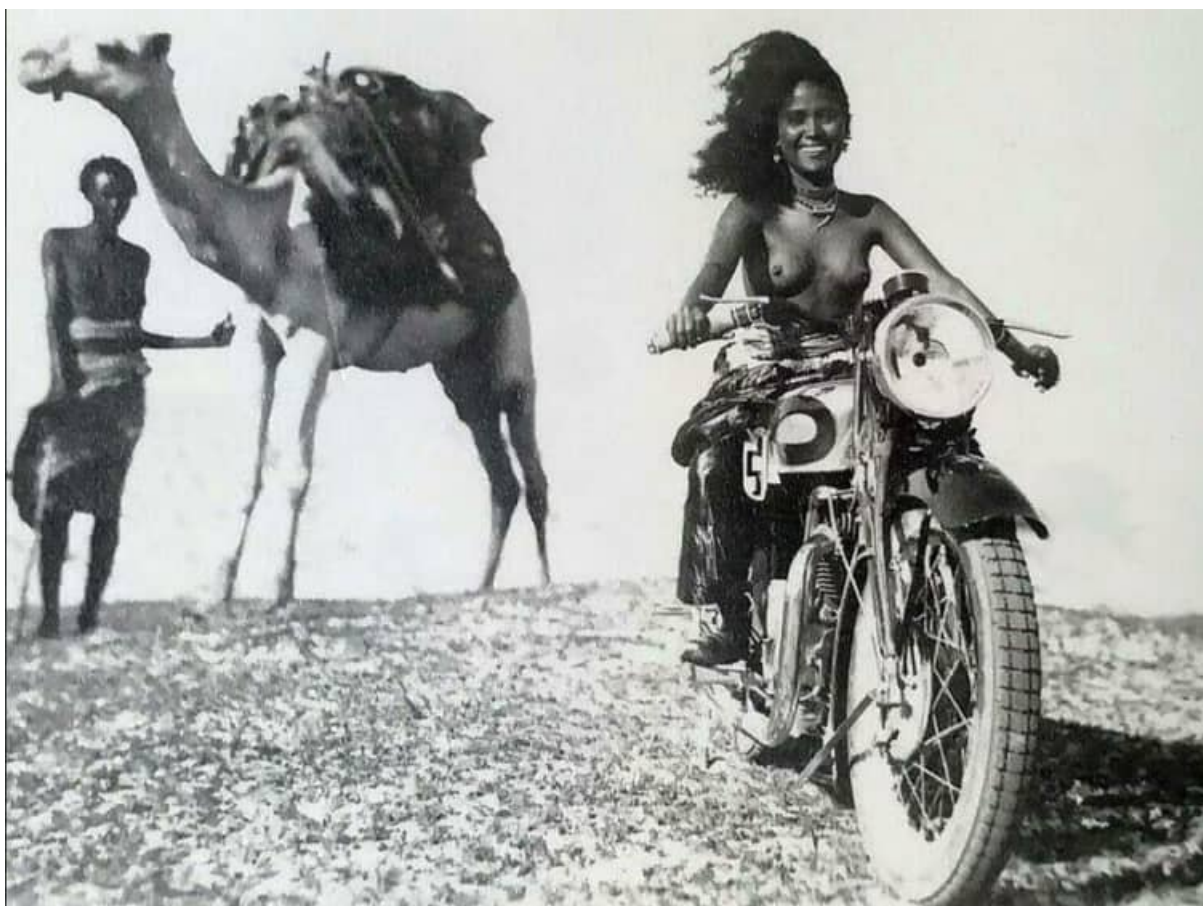




With these racing handlebars on her Harley Madame risks having to complain one day of stiffness in the back or worse of lumbago.



A 'white squaw' and her Indian..



Let's conclude this episode with this splendid 'Amazon of the desert'.



## World War 2 gallery

Most of the images in this gallery have been supplied by my chum Francois who has assembled an extraordinary archive of motor cycling pictures; readers are advised to check out his collection of photo-essays ('Images of Yesteryear' in the main menu).

**1939**





With a bilingual caption in French and Flemish this card depicts a squad of Belgians.



This restored survivor is a Norton Big 4 WD outfit with sidecar-wheel drive.





BSA G14 outfits, supplied to the Dutch army and set up for anti-aircraft duty.



This Finnish squaddie is mounted on a German-made Ardie S125 during the Winter War against Russia.





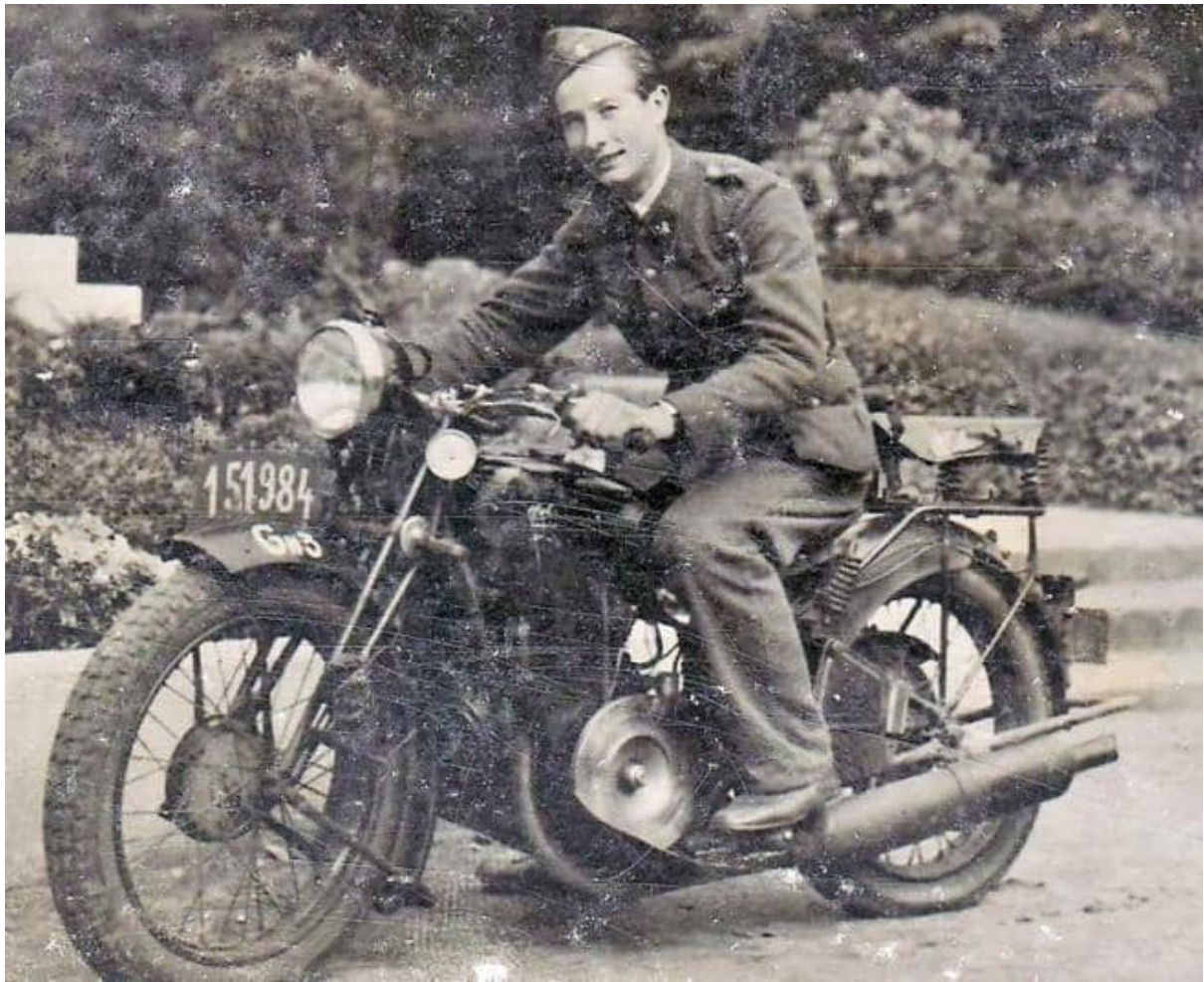
German Kradschützen (motor cycle infantry) roll into Warsaw, circa 1 October.





Parading in Berlin to celebrate Hitler's 50th birthday.





This Danish Nimbus outfit packs a 20mm punch.



On the rough with a Zündapp 'Green Elephant'.

**1940**





These outfits are French...



...as are these...





...and here are the Tommies.



These riders are Italian.





German riders at home...



...and away.



These riders are with the Luftwaffe.



A BMW R12 combo makes light of carrying three squaddies through a river.





The Wehrmacht's other combo of choice, a Zündapp, passes through the remains of a French town. This example is a flat-four K800-W.

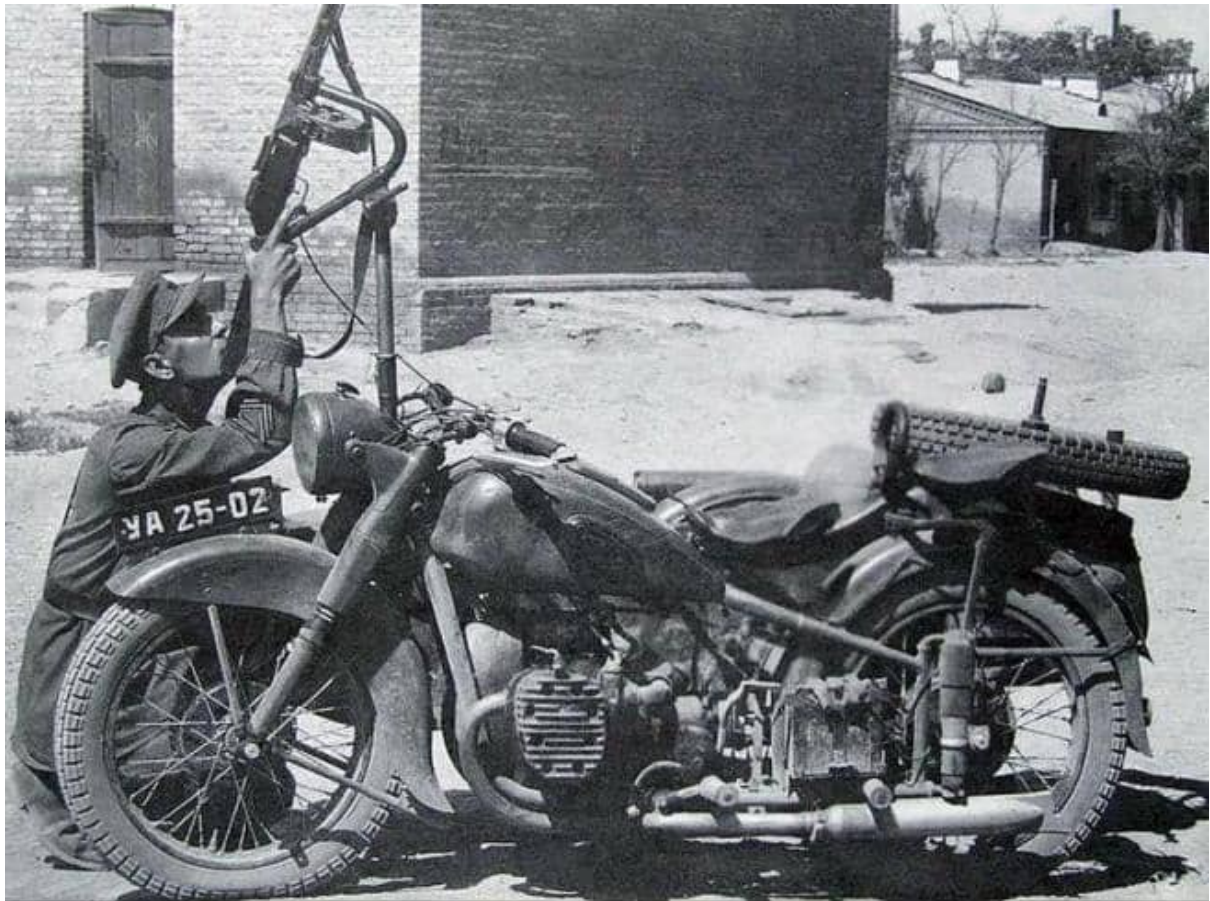


Another day, another city. These SS Panzergrenadiers are riding through Amsterdam on Zündapp KS750 twins.



1941





The Dnepr M72 superseded the TIZ AM600 and PMZ A750 which had performed poorly in the Winter War invasion of Finland. But pressing a PPSH41 submachine gun into service on an AA mount seems a tad over optimistic.



April, Germans in Greece.





April: Germans in Bulgaria. A 'liaison soldier' on an NSU 601TS.



July, Germans in Finland (on the Raate Road, Suomussalmi) with an R12 outfit.



July, Germans in Latvia.





September, Germans

in the Crimea.



October, Germans in Russia, the 'Vyazma Pocket'.













“A historic moment

in the Balkans: a vanguard battalion of Italian motor-cyclist Bersaglieri, having penetrated Yugoslavian soil from Albania, spots German scouts coming from the Bulgarian border. The soldiers of the two allied nations run towards each other and embrace amidst shouts of jubilation.”

**1943**



Captured in Tunisia.

**1944**



German paras on a heavily laden BMW outfit.





March, somewhere in Russia, a Wermacht Beemer combo and a Tiger.



Wermacht DRs compare notes.





June—a  
249 Company Royal Engineers Don R and his G3L aboard a glider en route to France.



Somewhere in France, a US Army 3rd Division DR with a well-laden Harley 45 WLA.





Carpique, 6km west of Caen, Sgt/Mjr RM Cooper of the 9th Canadian Brigade.



The US forces used Cushman scooters.



Also near Caen, DRs of the Cameron Highlanders of Ottawa.





A patrol of the 1st Czechoslovak Corps on Soviet M-72 combos on a village street in the Carpathian Mountains.

**Undated**













I wonder what happened if that Guzzi rider fired his Breda MG on the move?



A nice propaganda shot of the Red Army flying the red flag.





















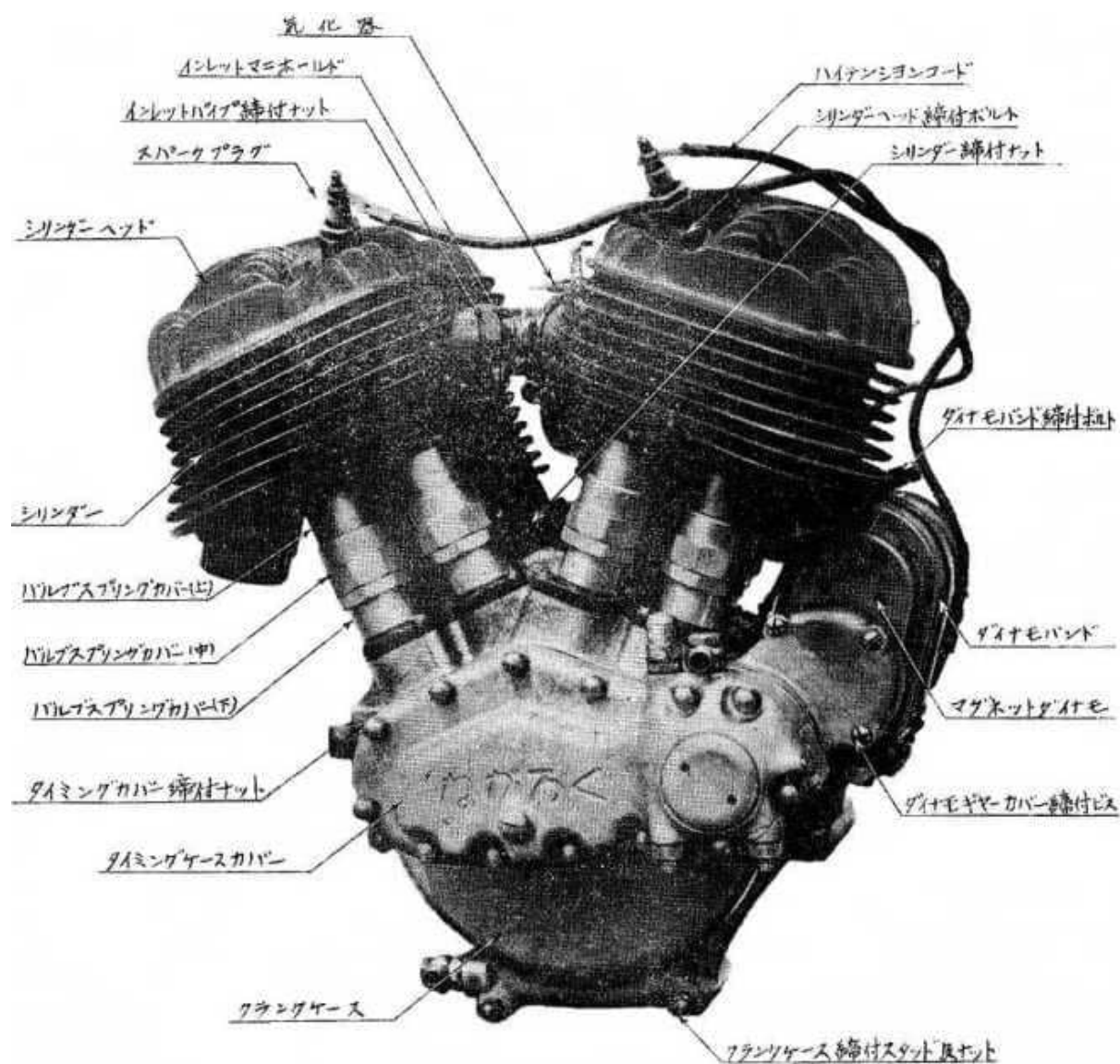


The Kurogane Type 95 was a 1,260cc side-valve V-twin designed and made by Nihon Nainenki for the Japanese army during World War II. Based on the Harleys that had been

built in Japan under licence, the 95 was produced as a three-wheel-drive outfit which saw service in China, Burma and the Philippines; about 4,700 were made between 1936 and 1944.















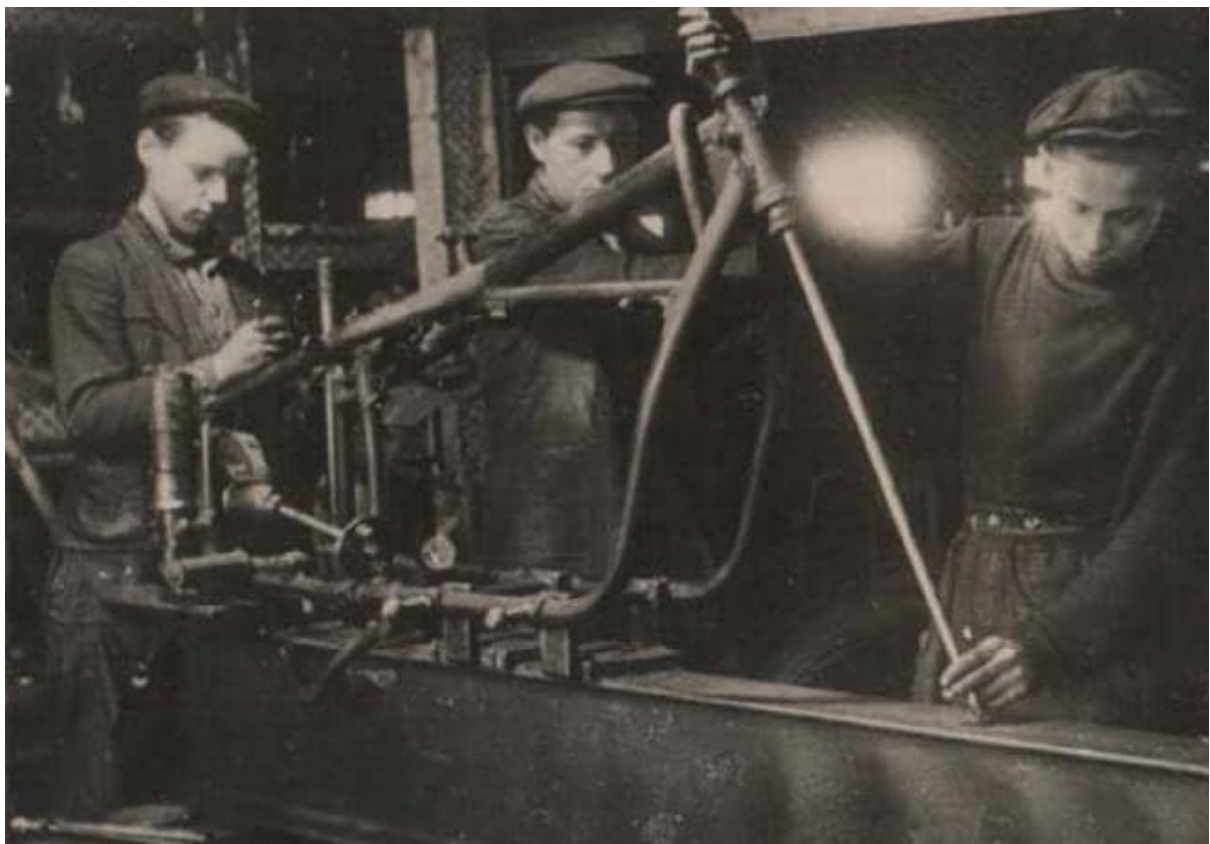












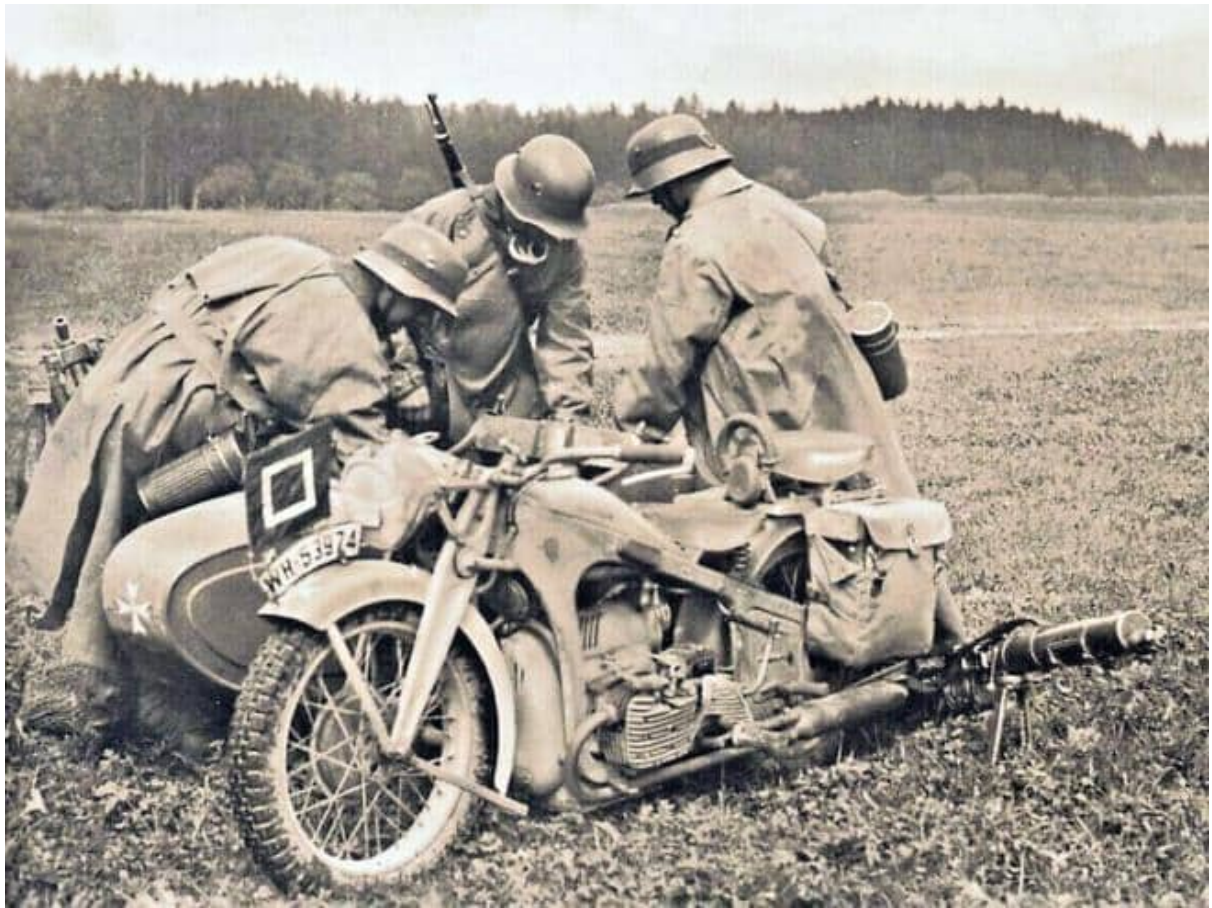
Russian boys and girls did their bit assembling bikes for the Red Army.





















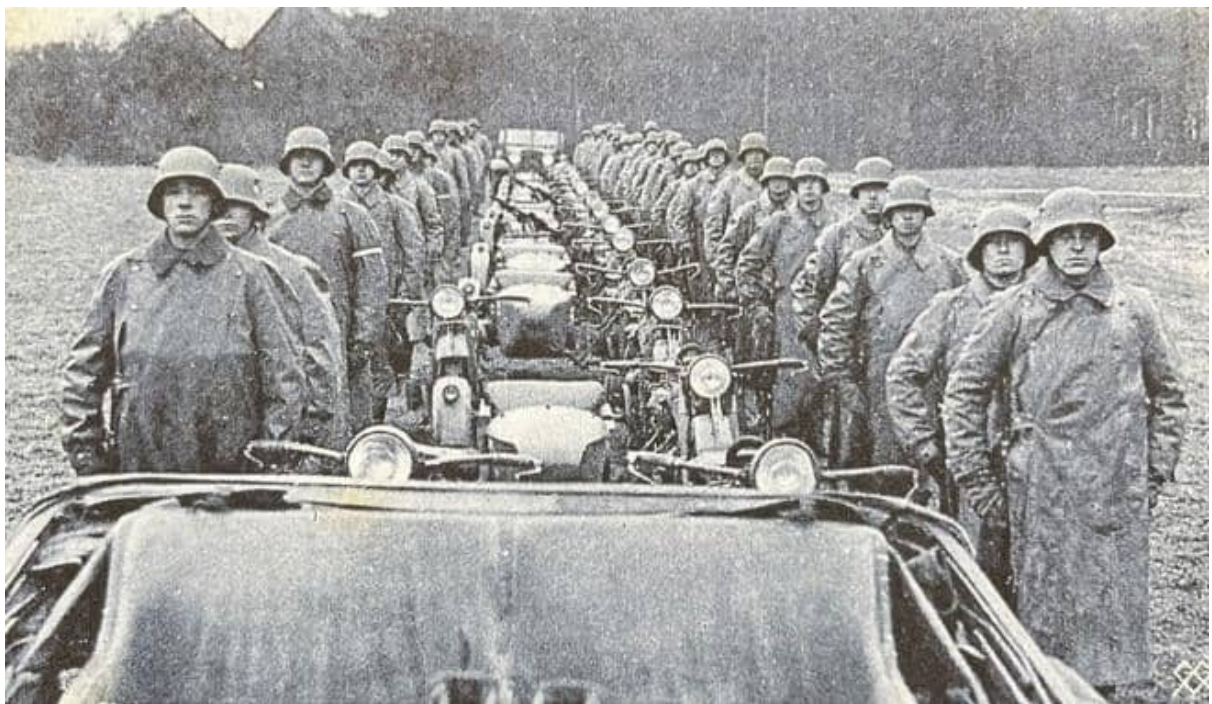


























These

Kiwis, pictured in North Africa, are mounted on Matchless G3s.





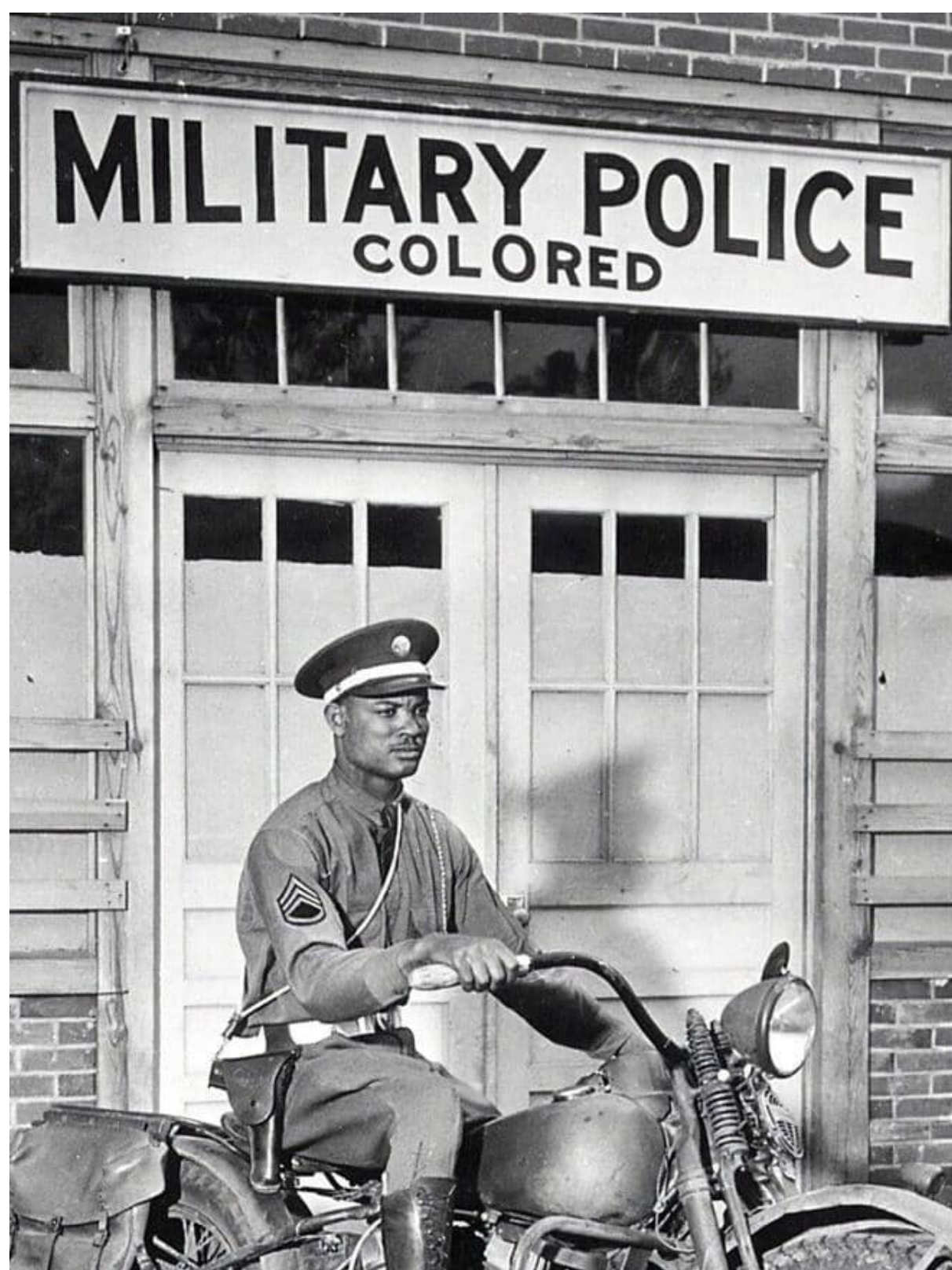


Bulgarian officers near Novi Sad which (as I didn't know but Wikipaedia did) "is the second largest city in Serbia after the capital Belgrade and the capital of the autonomous province of Vojvodina. It is located in the southern portion of the Pannonian Plain on the border of the Bačka and Syrmia geographical regions. Lying on the banks of the Danube river, the city faces the northern slopes of Fruška Gora."





*The next two images present an interesting contrast in many ways.*

















[motorcyclimeline.com](http://motorcyclimeline.com)